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Spain asks Baker to meet EC 'troika'

MADRID (AP) — Spain, asked U.S. Secretary of State James Baker Wednesday to discuss prospects for a Middle East peace conference with the European Community (EC) next month, diplomatic sources said. They said Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez proposed that Baker meet him and his colleagues from France and Greece, forming the so-called EC "troika," at East-West talks in Vienna March 6 and 7. Fernandez Ordonez, as the current president of the EC Council of Ministers, would also meet Baker in Washington March 13. He briefed Baker, visiting Madrid as part of an European tour, on the troika's recent peace efforts. The three ministers toured Jordan, Egypt and Syria last week and had talks earlier with the Israeli government and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat on prospects for an international peace conference. EC foreign ministers agreed at a meeting in Madrid Tuesday to press Washington to back an international peace conference.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية الراي

Today declared holiday

AMMAN (J.T.) — All government ministries, public departments and institutions will be closed today to celebrate the expected proclamation in Baghdad of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) by the leaders of Jordan, Egypt, North Yemen and Iraq, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Wednesday. The agency said the holiday was announced to allow all Jordanians to participate in celebrations marking the historic event. All schools will also observe a holiday but will organise various celebrations to mark the occasion, Petra said. The agency carried advice and instructions to schoolteachers and scout movements on celebration venues and programmes.

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Price: Jordan 100 fils; Syria 1 pound; Lebanon 1 pound; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams; Great Britain 25 pence

Arab Cooperation Council is born

By P.V. Vivekanand with agency dispatches

BAGHDAD — The leaders of Jordan, Egypt and North Yemen joined the Iraqi president in Baghdad Wednesday for a summit meeting which will today proclaim the birth of the four-member Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) that will boost Arab economic integration.

His Majesty King Hussein, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein are scheduled to sign an agreement establishing the ACC today.

Government leaders of the four countries — Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and his counterparts Atef Sedki of Egypt and Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani of North Yemen and First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan of Iraq — put the finishing touches to the charter of the new sub-regional economic alliance in meetings late Tuesday night.

The four accompanied the King

and how it will contribute to the overall Arab drive for economic integration.

Commenting on the new alliance, Ramadan told Iraqi News Agency (INA) in Baghdad: "The result of (Tuesday's) Amman meeting is clear evidence that Arabs are capable of achieving their aspirations if they unite in utilising their potential."

Ramadan described the council as "a major step which will be followed by other moves to strengthen Arab solidarity."

The Baghdad daily Al Thawra quoted Ramadan as saying the council must achieve the highest possible degree of cooperation.

"The birth of the council will be a serious, practical and realistic one with a solid basis for future Arab action."

The draft charter finalised in Amman Tuesday night set out the broad aims and structure for the council (see page 4).

The permanent secretariat of the council, which represents the 80 million people of the four countries, will be based in Amman and will follow up decisions made by



His Majesty King Hussein and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein drive through the streets of Baghdad Wednesday waving to cheering crowds

annual summit meetings and by prime ministers meeting twice every year.

According to officials quoted by Reuters, the bloc's four member countries have a total gross national product of more than \$100 billion, total annual exports of about \$15 billion and imports of \$30 billion.

Foreign Minister Qasem, in comments carried by the Associate Press, compared the ACC to the GCC and the proposed Maghreb union (see story below). "These steps are considered positive aspects for Arab unity," he said. "In the next few years, the Arab World will be able to deal with Europe or America or any

other country more effectively," he said.

The main tasks of the council include cementing existing economic ties among the four, boosting trade and tourism, promoting freer movement of goods and labour, setting up joint ventures and increasing exports and investments, according to Petra.

Dr. Osama Al Baz, political adviser to President Mubarak, echoed statements made by ACC heads of state that the aims of the council were primarily economic and not political.

Baz said that while the council "in its initial stages... will be built on the success of efforts in economic cooperation, this will in turn reflect politically, no doubt..."

Opening the Amman meeting Tuesday, Prime Minister Rifai said the council's door were open to all Arab states. An official quoted by the AP said Sudan had inquired about joining the group.

According to North Yemeni Premier Abdul Ghani, "we see in

this Arab alliance a positive step forward aimed at uniting the Arab World."

In addition to Rifai, the Jordanian delegation accompanying the King to Baghdad includes Royal Court Chief Field Marshal Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker, the King's political adviser Adnan Abu Odeh, the King's special adviser Amer Khammash, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ibn Zaid, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem and Minister of Information Hani Khasawneh. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan was sworn in as Regent prior to the King's departure from Amman.

Iraq honours Egyptian and N. Yemeni leaders

BAGHDAD (Petra) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein Wednesday decorated Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh with Al Rafidein Medal, Iraq's highest honour, in appreciation of the two Arab leaders' solidarity with and support for Iraq during the eight-year war with Iran. His Majesty King Hussein was awarded the same honour by the Iraqi president earlier this month.

Maghreb summit delayed by one day

MARRAKESH, Morocco (Agencies) — The start of a five-state summit on Maghreb unity was postponed for 24 hours Wednesday after three days of uncertainty over the intentions of Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi.

The official Algerian news agency APS said the leaders of Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania would now meet in the ancient Moroccan city of Marrakesh Thursday.

Summit host King Hassan of Morocco was spending Wednesday evening in informal consultations to find out what Qadhafi and Algerian President Chadli Benjedid had been talking about since Monday, when Benjedid flew unexpectedly to Libya, diplomats said.

Qadhafi, Tunisia's Zine Al Abidine Iba Ali and Benjedid arrived separately in their private planes after holding pre-summit consultations Tuesday believed over differences about the shape of the future union.

Mauritanian leader Maouiya Ould Sid Ahmad Taya was expected later in the day.

Qadhafi, who had not formally accepted the invitation to the summit, arrived in Marrakesh alone from Benjedid's country retreat close to the Moroccan border.

Benjedid flew to Libya unexpectedly Monday and took Qadhafi to Tunis for consultations with Ibn Ali amid speculation that the summit was in trouble.

The mystery deepened when Benjedid took him on to his residence at Bousfar near the west Algerian town of Oran.

But the arrival of Qadhafi, who embraced King Hassan at the airport, indicated they had sorted out any last-minute hitches.

Ibn Ali was the first of the leaders to arrive. Benjedid's plane took off half an hour after Qadhafi's from Bousfar.

The three-day summit was called to lay the foundations for a union of the five countries, but differences resurfaced as the opening approached.

Summit officials in Marrakesh, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Qadhafi was insisting that he would not attend unless the other four leaders made an irrevocable commitment to a "total and immediate union" of their five countries plus Mali, Niger, Chad and Sudan to the south.

The officials said some of the other countries also opposed to Qadhafi's plans for an extensive organisational structure and permanent secretariat for the union.

Hassan has made clear he envisages Maghreb union as a loose grouping of the five Arab governments, meeting periodically to discuss their joint problems.



King Hassan

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Mubarak calls for active American role

CAIRO (AP) — President Hosni Mubarak has said he wants the new U.S. administration to engage itself actively in the region and not act as a mailman, merely shuffling messages.

Mubarak also told a local magazine he was likely to make a planned visit to the United States for talks with President George Bush at the end of March.

"I imagine that my visit to Washington can take place at the end of next month," Mubarak said, but the two will meet previously in Tokyo at the Feb. 24 funeral of Emperor Hirohito.

In an interview appearing in Thursday's editions of the state-owned weekly Al Nassar, Mubarak said U.S. involvement is necessary to bring about a general lessening of tensions in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"I do not expect miracles from the new American president. Neither do I expect him to side with the Arab position," Mubarak said.

"The most I wish for is that the U.S. administration actively utilise prevailing conditions to push the peace process towards its



A Soviet soldier returning from Afghanistan is received by his family at the Soviet-Afghan border

Soviets lower curtains on Afghan intervention

TERMEZ, the Soviet Union (Agencies) — With ringing assertions it had not been in vain and a sad farewell to the fallen, the Soviet Union Wednesday ended its nine-year military intervention in Afghanistan at the spot where it all began.

At 11.55 a.m. (0655 GMT) in bright sunshine, Afghan force commander Lieutenant-General Boris Gromov crossed the steel bridge over the muddy river Amudarya behind the last column of around 50 tanks and 400 men — and said he would never look back.

"Our comrades who fell in battle will always be in our hearts," proclaimed banners on several of the tanks as smiling young soldiers waved and drivers hoisted their horns in clear delight at coming back home.

"We have fulfilled our internationalist duty to the end," Gromov, 45, told a rally of troops watched by some 5,000 local people on a dusty hillside overlooking the fast-flowing river which forms the border between the two countries.

"But our grief for those who will not return will never be stilled."

In the nine years and almost two months of the intervention, almost 15,000 Soviet soldiers and officers died and nearly 37,000 were "crippled," according to figures published in the weekly Literary Gazette Wednesday.

"You were soldiers of peace who displayed exemplary internationalism," General Nikolai Popov, commander of Soviet army forces in Uzbekistan, the Central Asian Republic in which Termez lies, told the rally. "The motherland thanks you."

(Continued on page 3)

LAST-MINUTE NEWS

U.S. ready for RJ hijack trial

WASHINGTON (R) — Federal prosecutors are ready to begin a hijacking trial of a Lebanese man who was captured by U.S. agents on a boat in the Mediterranean and flown to the United States. Fawaz Yunis is the first person to be tried under a 1984 U.S. law that lets the United States arrest hijackers anywhere in the world for attacks against planes carrying Americans. Jury selection was scheduled to begin Thursday but has been delayed at least a day because presiding U.S. district Judge Barrington Parker is ill with flu. Opening statements should come sometime next week if Parker is better. Yunis is charged with leading a group of five Amal militia members who hijacked a Royal Jordanian (RJ) airliner from Beirut on June 11, 1985.

Aid reaches cut off Sudanese town

KHARTOUM (R) — The first food convoy of river barges to get through for a year has reached the isolated south Sudanese town of Malakal after coming under rebel attack, the Sudan News Agency (SUNA) said Wednesday. Some 150,000 hungry people, residents and refugees, are sheltering in the garrison town about 200 kilometres from Nasir, a town which fell to the rebels in January.

Kuwaiti minister wounded in attack

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's Education Minister Anwar Abdulla Al Nouri was wounded late Tuesday by a disturbed individual who attacked him with a sharp object, an Interior Ministry official said Wednesday. The official told the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Nouri was in satisfactory condition at a local hospital. He described the attacker, identified only as Abdul Aziz Abbas Khurshid, as agitated and said he tried to commit suicide after the incident by burning himself.

Iranian cleric offers \$1m to kill Rushdie

NICOSIA (R) — A senior Iranian cleric offered \$1 million Wednesday to anyone killing British author Salman Rushdie, accused by many Muslims of blaspheming their religion. Iranian state television quoted cleric Hassan Sanei as saying his June Fifth Charity foundation would pay \$1 million to anyone killing Rushdie (see story on page 8).

Police arrest Winnie Mandela's driver

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Police arrested Winnie Mandela's driver near Johannesburg airport Wednesday after the black anti-apartheid leader returned from Cape Town where she visited her jailed husband, Nelson Mandela, witnesses said. The reason for the arrest was not immediately known. Mrs. Mandela, at the centre of a storm about her bodyguards and their alleged links with an assault on a black youth, remonstrated with the police, the witnesses said. The incident occurred at the side of the highway leading from the airport. No further details were available.

Troops arrest W. Bank boys, seal off home

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli troops in the occupied Gaza Strip shot and wounded a 14-year-old boy in a clash in Sha'til refugee camp.

In the West Bank refugee camp of 'Ain Beit Alma, troops arrested 14 boys suspected of attacks on alleged Arab collaborators with the Israeli occupation authorities, sources said.

The soldiers sealed the house of one of the suspects. Masked Palestinians patrolled Gaza City to ensure shops-owners obeyed a boycott of Israeli-made goods.

Mysterious blasts

Israeli officials said the army was investigating unexplained explosions which have killed and injured young Palestinians in the West Bank.

Palestinians said at least nine West Bank youngsters had been burned, cut or blinded by the blasts in the past six months of the 14-month-old uprising.

The mysterious blasts, most of them around Tamnun near Nabulus, have killed at least two Palestinians.

The army said some of the injuries were caused by magnetic flares dropped by jets on training exercises or by Arabs entering military firing areas and handling unexploded material.

An army spokesman refused to comment on news reports that Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin ordered the air force, police and army units to investigate. But officials confirmed an inquiry was under way.

The latest blast killed a Palestinian teenager Monday near

Qabatiya when an object he was handling exploded. A nine-year-old boy from Tamnun died last week of burns from an explosion.

A Palestinian doctor in the city of Nabulus who treated several burned youngsters said there was a military site in Tamnun where troops dumped explosives.

Some Arab children accused troops or Jewish settlers of throwing explosives at them or leaving flammable objects on streets where they would be handled by curious youngsters.

One Arab child being treated for burns to his hands and face in Al Itihad hospital in Nabulus said he saw what looked like a shiny package in the street after an army patrol passed through Tamnun.

"I opened it and flames shot out," he said.

Arab-Jewish meeting

Israeli parliamentarians and Palestinian leaders confirmed they met secretly Tuesday night in Jerusalem as part of a drive to better understand Jewish and Arab positions.

The seven participants, who included the Labour Party's Haim Ramon, Yair Tsaban of the left-wing Mapam and leading Palestinian activist Faisal Husseini, refused to discuss their talks.

But they said Tuesday's meeting was the second of its sort at the Notre Dame hotel — the exact point of division between West and Arab Jerusalem — and would be followed by others.

"I am sure we will see in the near future intensive and more frequent series of meetings be-

tween various Israeli important political figures and leaders from the West Bank and Gaza Strip who identify themselves with the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation)," Tsaban told Reuters.

Husseini said: "It was a meeting like others we have done before, and we will go on with such meetings in the future. From my side I think of meeting more and more Israelis and talking to them."

He added: "I believe we are human beings and we can talk to each other."

Tsaban said a similar meeting took place in January. "Every such meeting is an exchange of views about the situation, the initiatives, in the international arena," he said.

Husseini, who has spent 18 of the past 22 months in Israeli prisons without benefit of a trial, has said he is willing to meet with Israelis from across the political spectrum.

"I would like to spend more and more time... talking with different groups of Israelis, not only groups that support my aims but those who are not supporting our aims," Husseini said in an interview with the AP earlier Tuesday.

Husseini suggested he was also willing to meet with hardline Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, head of the right-wing Likud bloc.

Asked whether he was reading to talk to Israeli leaders, Husseini

(Continued on page 3)

Aoun's army, Geagea's militia locked in fierce Beirut battle

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanese army troops and hardline militiamen fought their bloodiest battles in two years on Wednesday for control of Lebanon's predominantly Christian areas, killing at least 28 people and wounding 60.

Separated by just metres in places, the two mainly Christian groups used tanks and artillery through the day, driving residents into hiding, leaving casualties lying helpless in the streets and setting buildings on fire.

The battles were the fiercest in east Beirut since 1986 when the current LF chief Samir Geagea ousted his predecessor Elie Hobeika in a coup that killed some 230 people.

The LF emerged as a challenge to the army's control of Christian areas about two years ago.

But they recently forged a temporary alliance to face their rivals on the other side of the green line.

A communique from the army command of General Michel Aoun conceded seven soldiers and officers were killed, 14 wounded and three missing and presumed kidnapped. Police said most of the other casualties were militiamen.

Major-General Sami Khatib, who commands rival units of the divided army, declared support for Aoun. He said "the Lebanese Forces are our common enemy."

Khatib's dramatic statement was broadcast by radio stations. He said he has placed the 22,000 troops under his command on alert and ordered them to facilitate the evacuation of army casualties to hospitals in west Beirut areas if the need arises.

Aoun has an estimated 20,000 Christian soldiers under his command.

Fires burned out of control as tank-led army units rolled down from Lebanon's central mountains into east Beirut behind a

murderous barrage of artillery on the militia's seaside war council command headquarters, police said.

The stench of cordite whiffed across Beirut as police said army units routed Lebanese Forces militiamen from several strongholds along the green line that splits Beirut.

Political sources said senior army, Lebanese Forces and Christian religious leaders had tried in vain to halt the fighting. Among those appealing for peace was Lebanon's highest Maronite Christian religious leader Patriarch Boutros Sfeir.

"The country does not belong to one faction but to all citizens. Halt your battles and spare civilians more bloodshed and destruction," pleaded Sfeir.

Military and security sources said at least 28 people, including seven soldiers, were killed and more than 60 wounded in the battles which started Tuesday

Iraqi president warns of expected Israeli attack

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein warned of an expected Israeli attack on Iraq in an interview published here Wednesday.

"A direct Israeli aggression on Iraq is expected, as we also expect Israel to spur Iran to resume hostilities. We are taking both cases into account," Hussein said in an interview with editors of Kuwait's daily newspapers visiting Baghdad.

"However, the present international situation, the situation in the region and Iraq's military might will not permit Israel to behave as it used to do before, that is to act at will in abandon," he added.

Hussein said peace with Iran could be reached even without signing a formal treaty. A U.N.-mediated ceasefire, enforced Aug. 20, halted Iran-Iraq hostilities. But peace negotiations on the eight-year-old war remain deadlocked.

"Peace can be maintained with or without an agreement. For our part, we prefer such an accord... because the suitable thing for this war is to have a peace treaty for the sake of stability in the region. However, we are behaving as if



Saddam Hussein

final peace is established," Hussein said.

Hussein was interviewed during a visit to Baghdad last week by Kuwaiti Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah.

Hussein said Israel "is part of the world and the region, and does know Iraq's potential and that it can guess its reactions."

Israeli warplanes bombed an Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981, claiming the facility was capable of producing nuclear bombs. Iraq has accused Israel more of

supplying Iran with weapons to enable it to continue fighting in the war.

He assured the Gulf Arab states that Iraq would not use its military might against them.

"I felt that some Arab brethren withheld their aid to Iraq after our victory in Fao. Until now I have not found an explanation for that," he said.

Iraq regained its southern Fao Peninsula from Iranian occupation in the final months of the war, precipitating Iran's belated acceptance of the ceasefire more than a year after Iraq had done so.

Hussein expressed Iraq's readiness to resolve a long-standing border dispute with Kuwait. "The clue to the solution lies in the hands of the two sides which should think in a correct manner how to reach a fraternal solution," he said.

Sheikh Saad conceded on his return to Kuwait that certain problems with Iraq remained to be solved.

Hussein reiterated Iraqi plans for democratic political reforms. He said a multi-party political system was needed to bring new blood to the ruling Baath Party.



An Afghan acts as referee as two dogs lock in battle during the weekly dog fights in Kabul. The fighting is broken off before the dogs get injured. Despite the withdrawal of Soviet troops and food shortages, life in Kabul continues normally.

Weizman: Shamir, Arens, Netanyahu hardly qualified to discuss security

LONDON — Israeli Science Minister Ezer Weizman has described Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Foreign Minister Moshe Arens and Deputy Foreign Minister Binjamin Netanyahu as "square-heads, on the borderline of fascist."

In an outspoken interview published by The Independent here Tuesday, Weizman said that, as men lacking combat experience, Israel's team of foreign policy makers were hardly qualified to discuss Israel's security.

Weizman said the idea of the PLO destroying Israel made him "piddle myself with laughter."

With "one of the best air forces in the world" and "a good little army," he said, Israel had little to fear from the PLO. "They can cause problems. They are, in put it mildly, a nuisance. But anybody, who throws bricks and bottles at you does it because he has no F-16s and no tanks."

Shamir, Arens and Netanyahu were being unrealistic in calling for an end to the intifada as a precondition for talks, he went on.

"If you wait for riots to stop for political solutions, you don't

understand that riots started because there was no political solution. So to sit back and shout, 'Stop the riots first and then we'll talk to you,' is a lot of bullshit."

"Kissinger talked to the Vietnamese in Paris when B-52s were still blowing the hell out of Hanoi," he noted.

Weizman lamented the fact that he was "not allowed" to talk to Yasser Arafat, noting that only the PLO might have "authority on a solution between us and them."

"When people ask me, 'Can you trust Arafat?' my answer is very simple: How the hell can I know, unless I talk to him?"

Weizman said he was not bothered by suggestions that the PLO was demanding a state in the administered territories merely as a first step to the eventual elimination of Israel. "Mr. Kohl would probably love to have East Germany," he reasoned. "Mr. Hoenacker would love to have West Germany. So what."

"How do I know Egypt doesn't give up too: that's why I have my F-16, my F-15, I have my tanks, and I have my armies and I have

my United States guarantees. If I took my chance with 50 million Egyptians, why not with them?"

Dan Petreanu adds:

The Likud's Uzi Landau, reacting to Weizman's statements, said that the former Air Force commander's political views proved that "even a general's rank cannot compensate for the absence of common sense."

Landau dismissed Weizman's claim that military experience was a prerequisite for formulating defence policy, arguing that military experience "could be useful" in government positions but was not necessary. He pointed out that lifelong civilians such as Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher "managed somehow to formulate very well-defined security positions."

Landau charged that Weizman lacked "elementary responsibility towards his cabinet colleagues, whom he attacks whenever and wherever possible."

Landau added that many Likud ministers "who do not necessarily appreciate Weizman's views nevertheless treat him with respect." — The Jerusalem Post.

No mourning in Kabul over Soviet pullout

KABUL (R) — The departure of the last Soviet soldier from Afghanistan Wednesday passed virtually unnoticed in the streets and bazaars of Kabul.

The last Soviet detachment guarding the airport slipped quietly out of the Afghan capital Tuesday night without fanfare. There was no sign of anyone mourning their departure.

A shopkeeper huddled under his quilt against the winter cold echoed a commonly-held sentiment in Kabul when he told reporters: "Afghans can now solve their problems themselves. They are brothers, they know each other's mentality."

Ghulam, his little shop stacked high with grey Soviet army hats at \$2 each, added: "Now that the Russians are gone we will have peace."

A passing patrol of Afghan government troops, their Kalashnikov rifles held carelessly, drew almost no attention in the old town.

A soldier stood day-dreaming on top of his armoured personnel carrier, his hands thrust deep in his pockets in the sunshine.

Taxi-drivers said the arrival of a fuel convoy down the Salang Highway from northern Afghanistan Tuesday had eased a serious petrol shortage.

Bread remained in short supply and women and children could still be seen queuing in the cold outside bakeries.

There was plenty of food in the bazaars — mounds of nuts, dates, raisins and sweetmeats — and vendors pushed barrows of cauliflower through the muddy streets.

But the prices were beyond the reach of poor Kabulites. Outside the blue-domed Pul-i-Kheshti Mosque, women begged in head-to-toe veils sought alms from a young turbaned soldier from Afghanistan's Sikh community.

Missiles in Jalalabad

The Afghan government has reinforced with Scud missiles its defence of the country's second city, Jalalabad, a rebel Mujahideen news organisation said Wednesday.

The Afghan media resource centre said its correspondents inside Afghanistan did not know how many of the ground-to-ground missiles had been delivered to a special Afghan army unit trained to use them.

Waldegrave says uprising unstoppable

KUWAIT (R) — British Junior Foreign Minister William Waldegrave said Wednesday no power on earth could stop the 14-month-old Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories unless Israel granted Palestinians their rights.

"We know very well from our experience in the dissolution of the British empire that when a people decide to withdraw its consent from being governed there is no power on earth that can stop that," he told a news conference in Kuwait.

"Nothing will suppress the aspirations of the Palestinians for their rights."

Waldegrave incurred Israeli anger last month by meeting Palestinian Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat and referring to the past terrorist activities of Israeli leaders.

He urged Israel to realise the

determination of Palestinians and acknowledge PLO policy shifts that accepted Israel's existence and renounced terrorism.

"What needs to be done is to bring home to opinion in Israel that there is no question now of seeking the destruction of Israel," Waldegrave said.

He said PLO policy shifts could guarantee a secure future for Israel and a historic opportunity to end 40 years of Arab-Israeli conflict.

"The Palestinian people are not willing to wait for resolutions and committees and grand summit conferences for another 20 years," Waldegrave added.

"There is no gain in waiting every day that passes more bitterness is stored up between Palestinian and Jewish people who have in the end to live together forever."

Egypt, Israel narrow differences on Taba

CAIRO (R) — Negotiators from Egypt and Israel have narrowed differences over compensation payable to Israeli owners of a hotel and tourist village at the Sinai resort of Taba.

Tourism Minister Fouad Sultan said Tuesday night after two days of talks with Israeli owners and government officials the two sides would report to their respective governments and return to the negotiating table Sunday.

The national Middle East News Agency (MENA) quoted Sultan as saying the talks, which he described as objective, had brought the views of both sides closer on the financial analysis of the Taba tourist facilities.

The Israeli owners of the 322-room Sonesta Hotel, represented by main partner Elie Paposhado, have demanded \$70 million. Egypt offered only \$20 million.

Sultan said negotiators reached an agreement on future management of the luxury hotel but gave no details.

The Israelis have demanded co-management and Egypt said the issue would only be agreed in accordance with previous contracts signed by Egypt with international hotel chains.

Israel has pledged to withdraw from the 700-metre border strip within days of an agreement on compensation and access to the resort after it is handed back to Egypt.

Progress has been reported in parallel talks on access. Egypt and Israel have agreed to work for a settlement by the end of February.

The Zionist state retained Taba, occupied in the 1967 war, when it pulled out from the Sinai peninsula in 1982 under a treaty with Egypt.

After years of wrangling, international arbitrators ruled last September that Taba was Egyptian territory and ordered Israel to return it to Cairo.

Foreign Ministry officials said U.S. State Department legal adviser Abraham Sofaer arrived in Cairo to review progress at Taba talks.

Sofaer has previously mediated between Egypt and Israel when efforts to solve the six-year dispute faced deadlock.

The United States, which brokered the 1979 treaty, attends the compensation talks in Cairo as an observer.

Iran, Britain locked in row over prisoner

LONDON (AP) — Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's government has denied Iranian accusations that an Iranian jailed in Britain was being tortured and denied parole for political reasons.

Iran's minister of labour and social affairs, Abolqasem Sarhadzadeh, charged earlier Tuesday that the prisoner, Kourosh Fouladi, was being brutally mistreated by British prison guards.

The official Islamic Republic News Agency, monitored in Nicolas, said Sarhadzadeh made the accusation in an open letter to Fouladi, a former doorman at the Iranian embassy in London.

Fouladi was arrested in London in 1980 following a bungled car bombing attack in the capital. He was the only survivor of a gang of three bombers who allegedly blew themselves up. He was jailed for 10 years at London's Old Bailey central criminal court in 1982.

IRNA maintained the bomb was planted by the Iranian resistance group Mujahadeen-e-Khalq. The letter, which IRNA said was published in the Iranian daily Kayhan Tuesday, said Sarhadzadeh deplored the "brutality of British

prison wardens."

The British are unabashedly demonstrating their hostility to the Islamic revolution by refusing to release the Iranian prisoner on parole," the minister wrote.

Sarhadzadeh said in the letter that he knew the prison guards who urinated on Fouladi's head, had him sexually assaulted by drunks at night, housed him with mentally unsound patients and subjected him to other forms of torture, the IRNA report said.

It contrasted that with the "humane treatment" given to Roger Cooper, 52, a Briton held in jail in Iran for more than three years awaiting trial on spying charges. Intelligence Minister Mohammad Rey Shahril said Tuesday a "heavy ruling" had been passed against Cooper but said a final decision had not been taken against him.

The Home Office denied Fouladi was being mistreated. A Home Office spokeswoman, who in accordance with British practice declined to be named, said: "The consideration of parole is one taken by the parole board taking into account the factors of the individual case itself and not on outside factors."

SAFARIWAY INTERNATIONAL GROCERY CONTEST

GRAND PRIZE WINNER

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MR. JOAQUIN ROMERO

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77111-14

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Quran

15:40 Programme review

15:45 Children programme

16:15 Local programme

17:30 Programme on Jordan

18:00 News for the local

18:20 Local programme

18:50 "Give me a break"

19:15 Health programme

19:40 Programme review

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 Local service

21:30 Programme review

22:40 Programme on Islamic art

23:00 Arabic film

23:10 News summary in Arabic

23:10 Film (cont.)

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 La Baby Sitter

18:30 A variety programme

19:00 News in French

19:15 La Vie En France

19:30 News in Hebrew

19:45 Varieties

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 Bill Cosby Show

21:10 Thirty Something

21:30 News in English

22:30 Feature film, "Brewster's Millions"

PRAYER TIMES

04:56 Sunrise

06:14 Sunrise

11:50 Dhuhr

14:57 Asr

17:26 Maghrib

18:43 Isha

CHURCHES

Assemblies of God Church, Tel

632785 St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990, Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637430

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terranova Church Tel. 623366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625833, Tel. 625833

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 683328

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811265

Rainbow Congregation Tel. 822485

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 821264

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Another increase in temperature will occur and wind will be southerly moderate. In Amman, wind will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

	Min-max temp.
Amman	11-12
Aqaba	7-20
Deserts	1-13
Jordan Valley	6-21

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 11, Aqaba 19 Humidity readings: Amman 51 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Ibrahim Abu Hamid 677436

Dr. Yahya Abdul Rahim 736724

Dr. Ahmad Othman 796384

Dr. Mahmoud Al Awad 741291

Firas pharmacy 661912

Fordous pharmacy 776336

Al Asma pharmacy 627655

Namroukh pharmacy 626762

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 649485

Shamsi pharmacy 657660

IRBID:

Dr. Mahmoud Khalil (—)

Al Shura pharmacy 1982381

ZARQA:

Dr. Mutazz Damra (—)

Khalil pharmacy 983417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 108

Rescue Police 102, 621111, 627777

Fire Brigade 6236093

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 6564091

Public Security Department 656040

Hotel Complaints 665111

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467

Amman Municipality 787111

Complaints 787111

DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEE ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)532015, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

Time	From
09:10	Aqaba (RJ)
09:10	Damascus (RJ)
09:15	Jeddah (RJ)
09:30	Cairo (RJ)
09:45	Doha, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:55	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:00	Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
10:00	Cairo (RJ)
10:15	Larnaca (RJ)
10:30	Athens (RJ)
10:45	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
10:45	London, Geneva (RJ)
10:50	Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
10:50	Bangkok (RJ)
10:50	Tripoli (RJ)
10:50	Rome (RJ)
10:50	Baghdad (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

Time	From
06:20	Damascus, Frankfurt (LH)
13:10	Baghdad (LA)
13:10	Tunis (TU)
14:30	Bahrain (GF)
15:00	Kuwait (KU)
15:00	Ankara, Istanbul (TK)
16:45	Riyadh (SV)
18:45	Cairo (MS)
18:45	Baghdad (AF)
18:45	Sana'a (YF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg

Apple	500-550
Banana	350-400
Banana (Mukammal)	300-350
Beans	800-900
Broad beans	700-800
Cabbage	250-300
Carrots	200-250
Cauliflower	200-250
Cucumbers	400-500
Eggplant	600-800
Orange (Shamouti)	450-500
Orange (local)	350-400
Onion (dry)	200-250
Leek (per one)	100-150
Onion (green)	300-350
Pepper (hot)	750-850
Pepper (sweet)	600-700
Potato	300-350
Spinach	150-200
Tomato	400-500
Tomatoes	220-300

FOR FRIDAY

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77111-14

PROGRAMME ONE

18:00 Quran

18:15 Children programme

18:30 Religious programme

18:45 News in Arabic

19:15 Religious programme

19:30 Religious seminar

19:40 Sports programme

19:50 The world around us

20:00 Feature film

20:30 Message from Oman

20:30 Arabic series

20:30 News summary in Arabic

20:30 Local programme

20:30 News in English

20:30 News summary in Arabic

20:30 Programme (cont.)

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Children cartoons

18:15 French feature film

18:30 News in French

18:45 Documentary

19:00 News in Hebrew

19:15 News in Arabic

19:30 News in English

19:45 News in Arabic

19:50 The One Day

20:00 News in English

20:30 Feature film

20:30 Three's Company

PRAYER TIMES

04:56 Sunrise

06:14 Sunrise

11:50 Dhuhr

14:57 Asr

17:26 Maghrib

18:43 Isha

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

WORLD BANK TEAM ARRIVES: A delegation from the World Bank arrived in Jordan Wednesday for a several-day visit, during which it will hold talks with officials from Jordan Valley Authority. The talks will focus on the relations between the bank and the authority and on the projects carried out by the authority and funded by the bank. The delegation will also visit a number of the project sites, including Al Wadiah Dam, part of which will be funded by the World Bank. (Petra)

JORDAN TO ATTEND TO TALKS: The Ministry of Tourism has received an invitation to participate in the two-day emergency meeting of the general assembly of the Arab Tourism Organisation (ATO) which is due to convene in Tunis on Feb. 23. This meeting is designed to discuss the Arab Social and Economic Council's decision to dissolve the ATO. (Petra)

EBREAN WORKERS UNION: Labour Ministry Secretary General Dr. Saleh Al-Farajeh Wednesday discussed with the visiting delegation of Ebrean Workers Union cooperation in the field of labour. (Petra)

DEBATE ON TAXATION: Income Tax Department Director General Salim Al-Tarawneh and Jordanian lawyer Isma'il Mahadin will hold a debate on "Attainment of Justice in Taxation" on Feb. 18 at the Amman Chamber of Industry at 5:00 p.m. The seminar is organised by the Business and Professional Women Club. (J.T.)

HASHISH PEDDLER JAILED: The military court has sentenced Sulaiman Youssef Abu Sulaiman to three years imprisonment and the payment of JD 2,000 for trafficking with hashish. The military governor approved the sentence. (Petra)

TAWJIHI RESULTS REVIEWED: Education Department director and teachers in Balqa Governorate held a meeting Wednesday and reviewed the results of the Tawjihi examination for the first semester. (Petra)

SAHLULIYEH MUNICIPAL BUDGET: The Balqa governor approved the budget of Sahliyeh Municipal Council which amounts to JD 10,260. (Petra)

INTERNAL TOURISM: The committee in charge of reactivating internal tourism in Zarqa Governorate held a meeting Wednesday under the chairmanship of the Zarqa governor. The committee discussed reactivating tourism in the governorate, producing a film on local archaeological and touristic sites, and organising tours within the governorate. During the meeting, the committee decided to plant more trees in the governorate and to place road signs. (Petra)

PHYSICS CONFERENCE IN MARCH: A physics conference is due to be held at the University of Jordan on March 20. Taking part in the four-day conference, which is organised by the University of Jordan and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), are specialists from the university, the RSS and private and government institutions, as well as participants from Arab and foreign countries. (J.T.)

GRAIN STORAGE: A symposium on storing and transporting grain, organised by the American Grain Association, in cooperation with the Supply Ministry, will start Thursday in Amman. The four-day symposium will discuss a number of research and working papers, concerning American grain standards, qualities of stored grain, storing methods and humidity. Taking part in the symposium are officials from the Supply Ministry, the head of the American Grain Association in Cairo and a number of experts there. (Petra)

CAEU CNEF TO ATTEND TUNIS TALKS: Secretary General of the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) Hassan Ibrahim will participate in the 46th session of the Arab Council and Economic Council meeting which will convene in Tunis on Feb. 20. The meetings will discuss trade exchange among Arab countries. (Petra)

INFORMATION TALKS IN TUNIS: Jordan News Agency Director General Ali Al-Safadi and Jordan Company for Television, Radio, and Cinema Production Director General Jawad Maraga will form the Jordanian delegation to the meetings of the Arab Information and Communication Ministers which is scheduled to convene in Tunis on Feb. 20. The cabinet convening Wednesday under Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thawqan Al-Hindawi approved the composition of the delegation. (Petra)

COMPUTER TRAINING COURSE ENDS: Sixteen officials from industrial, commercial, financial and governmental institutions in Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates have participated in a ten-day training course on computers at the Institute of Public Administration. (Petra)

SEMINAR ON SOIL AND PLANT: A three-day seminar on soil and plant will be held Saturday at the University of Jordan's Faculty of Agriculture. A number of research papers and scientific studies will be discussed. (Petra)

LOAN TO PEASANTS IN SALT: The Agricultural Credit Corporation in Salt gave loans amounting to JD 370,220 to peasants during 1988. (Petra)

SPEECH AND HEALTH CENTRE: The National Speech and Health Centre received a total of 356 cases, suffering from speech and hearing problems, during the first six months of operation in July 1988, according to a centre report. The report said the number of hearing cases totalled 281, including 136 cases for children under 10 years of age. The speech cases reported were 85, including 67 for children under 10. (J.T.)

HASHISH PEDDLER JAILED: The military court has sentenced Muhammad Badri Sulaiman to a one-year imprisonment and the payment of JD 1,000 for possessing hashish. The military governor has approved the sentence.

SALE OF OIL PRODUCTS: The Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) said that it sold a total of 283,110 tonnes of oil products during the last month against 275,024 tonnes in the same period last year. It said that the largest single type of product was fuel oil of which the company sold 94,915 tonnes in January 1989.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

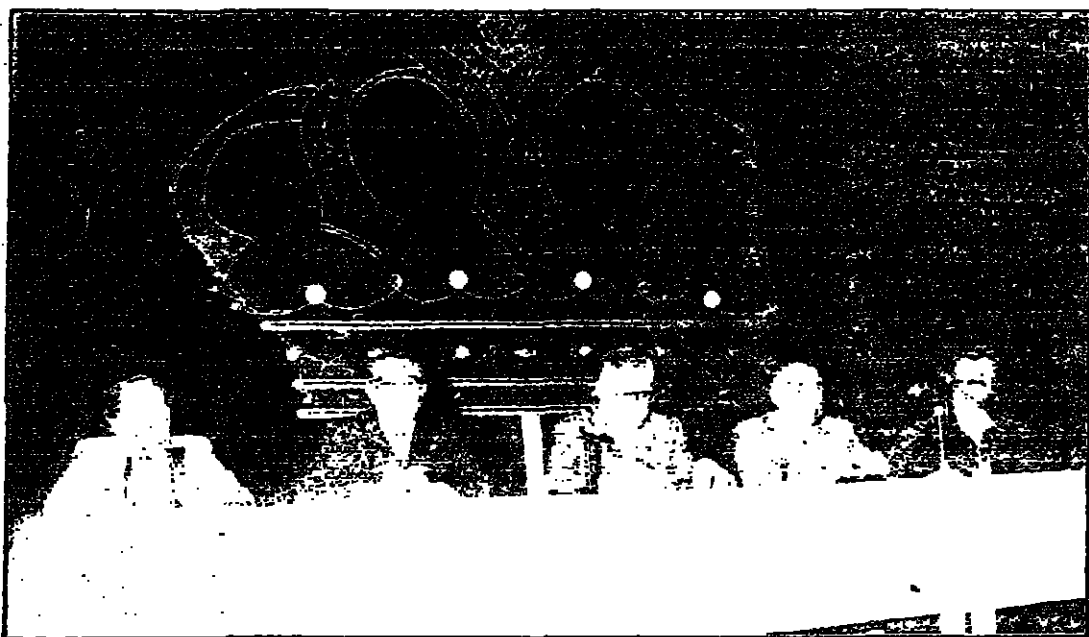
- An art exhibition by Paul and Emanuel Gairagossian at Abdul Khalid Shouman Foundation.
- An exhibition of lithographies by French artist Jean-Paul Dubaut at the French Cultural Centre.
- The Arab Contemporary Artists exhibition at Al Wasiti Gallery.
- An exhibition entitled "Town Squares of Europe" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- An art exhibition entitled "Warm Colours in the Jordanian Environment" by students from the University of Jordan, at the Yarmouk University.
- An exhibition of models of the Jordanian plastic art, in which 22 Jordanian artists are participating, at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- An exhibition entitled "The Ties Between the Middle East" at the Department of Geography, the University of Jordan.

CONCERT

- piano concert by the French team "Duo Gerard" at the Hotel Philadelphia International - 8:00 p.m.

FILMS

- German film entitled "Men" and a Greek film entitled "Underground Passage" are shown respectively Thursday and Friday at the Royal Cultural Centre as part of the European Film Week - 8:00 p.m.
- A Spanish video film entitled "Requiem por un campesino español" at the Spanish Cultural Centre - 4:30 p.m.
- A feature film entitled "Kramer vs. Kramer" at the American Center - 7:00 p.m.



A meeting on the role of schools in providing protection to children from road accidents held Wednesday in Irbid (Petra photo)

Meeting discusses role of schools in campaign against road accidents

IRBID (J.T.) — The role of schools in providing protection to children from road accidents was the theme of a general meeting held in Irbid Wednesday and attended by directors of government schools in the Irbid Governorate.

President of the Jordan Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents Muhammad Dabbas was among the main speakers at the meeting.

Dabbas outlined the society's activities and programmes to provide protection to the public and programmes for the society to

help reduce road accidents. Dabbas referred to the role of the school and home in promoting awareness among children on ways of a protecting themselves from road hazards, and urged the Ministry of Education to contribute to this effort.

A Department of Education official, Qasem Abu Ain, addressed the meeting, outlining the Ministry of Education's activities at schools to spread awareness among children with regard to road dangers.

Director of the Traffic Department Colonel Husni Ala'uddin

reviewed statistics on road accidents which occurred in Jordan between 1970 and 1988.

According to the Traffic Department, a total of 177,128 road accidents occurred in the country between 1970 and 1987 causing the death of 6,598 persons and the injury of 103,780 others.

The Jordan Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents earlier took part in a campaign to spread awareness among the public on the need to wear seat-belts in vehicles, a law which was enforced in the Kingdom as of Feb. 1, 1989.

Court sentences murderer to death

AMMAN (J.T.) — The criminal court in Amman has sentenced Faisal Saleh Ahmad Al-Ziyout to death by hanging for murdering his step mother and her three young children aged between one and a half and four years.

The court also sentenced the murderer's sister Hanan Saleh to 20 years in jail with hard labour for being accessory to the crime which took place in Ramtha last year.

According to the court, Faisal killed his stepmother Bad-

rich out of hatred following her marriage to his father five years after the death of his first wife.

Faisal and his sister Hanan plotted to get rid of the stepmother and her children because their father had decided to leave his real estate to the three children, depriving them of the inheritance, according to the court hearings.

A report in Al-Rai Arabic daily said that Faisal had failed in his university studies, prompting

his father to expel him from home, which in turn caused Faisal and Hanan to hate the father and his second wife and children.

The report said that Faisal had thought that his father drove him out of his house, upon the instigation of his new wife.

Faisal and his sister plotted to kill Badrieh and her three children while she was alone in her home at noon preparing the midday meal. According to the report, Faisal used an iron rod to hit the victims on the head.



Tree-planting ceremony held at Dabouq

A TOTAL of 2,000 fruit and forest trees were planted during a ceremony held at Dabouq, west of Amman, Wednesday. The ceremony was attended by Water Authority of Jordan Secretary General Mu'taz Sibbeisi who delivered a speech calling on the local citizens to plant trees and help green Jordan by the year 2,000. The Ministry of

Water and Irrigation is carrying out a tree planting programme in different parts of the country where water pumping stations have been built. The main tree planting ceremony Wednesday was held near the Dabouq Water Tower which has a capacity of 2,500 cubic metres (Petra photo)

Israelis arrest 14 West Bank boys

Continued from page 1

said: "If it's the right place, the right timing, the right person, I will not say no. If it's the wrong time, the wrong place, the wrong person, I will say no."

Thatcher's call

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher urged Israel Wednesday to respond to peace initiatives by the PLO, a British government source said.

Thatcher made the appeal dur-

ing a meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, her first talks with a top official of Shimon Peres's Likud Party since a visit to Israel in 1986.

"We recognise that the PLO has made some movement. Time will only show if that is a genuine movement on their part," the source said. "She urged the Israelis... to make some response."

Britain has angered Israel by upgrading relations with the PLO.

In parliament Tuesday,

Soviets leave Afghanistan

Continued from page 1

news briefing Tuesday in Moscow that guerrillas were assembling outside major cities — including about 30,000 around Kabul — but he did not say whether they were preparing to attack.

On Wednesday, rebels claimed there was heavy fighting around a former Soviet air base north of Kabul. The fighting started Saturday with a rebel attack on the Bagram airbase, 40 kilometres north of Kabul, said a spokesman for the Pakistan-based Jamiat-i-

Islami group. In Pakistan, Afghan rebels marked the final withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan by bickering over control of a proposed interim government to succeed the now-unprotected President Najibullah.

In Rawalpindi, near Islamabad, Mujahideen rebels hoping to take power in Kabul were no closer to agreement on the composition of a consultative council, or Shura, after five days of hectic consultations.

Abu Dhabi meeting urges Islamic states to purchase Palestine products

AMMAN (Petra) — The general assembly of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which concluded meetings in Abu Dhabi, has urged all Islamic nations to allow agricultural crops produced in occupied Palestine to be marketed in their countries especially olive oil of which there is presently a huge surplus in the occupied territories.

Mr. Ahmad Ghneim, who attended the assembly meetings on behalf of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, said that the assembly also called on Islamic nations to tighten their boycott measures against Israel to stop it from infiltrating Asian and African nations, and urged Arab and Islamic nations to promote their cooperation in industrial fields and in implementation of joint ventures and to increase the volume of goods exchanged among them.

The assembly paid tribute to the Palestinian uprising in the occupied Arab lands and appealed to all Muslims to provide backing and assistance to the "stone children" to help them stand fast in the face of Israel's repressive measures, and to resist Israel's plans to uproot the Palestinians from their homeland and establish Jewish settlements, Ghneim noted.

Ghneim was speaking upon his return to Amman after taking

part in the general assembly meeting which, he said, dwelt in its discussions on measures to promote trade exchanges among Muslim nations and urged all countries to give impetus to the Iraq-Iran peace process in implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The assembly appealed to the Islamic World to contribute positively to the peace process and urged Iraq and Iran to work towards reestablishing a permanent peace in the Gulf region, Ghneim added.

He said that the assembly also appealed to the Islamic World to help end the tragic situation in Lebanon and to help the Arab League's six-member committee to restore normal life to the embattled nation.

According to Ghneim, the assembly voiced deep appreciation to the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) for financing joint projects undertaken by Islamic

countries and urged the bank to pursue its efforts to develop the Islamic World.

Ghneim said that the assembly has entrusted the chamber to help set up liaison offices in Islamic nations to facilitate the implementation of joint projects in which the bank participates, especially in trade development schemes.

Apart from administrative matters and future meetings, the assembly discussed progress in 720 joint projects being carried out in Islamic nations and expressed satisfaction with the pace of their implementation.

According to Ghneim, the assembly received a Jordanian proposal for the creation of specialised federations within the Islamic World to operate under the umbrella of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and attain further accomplishments in Islamic economic cooperation.

The Jordanian proposal, Ghneim noted, calls for the creation of federations for maritime shipping, land and air transportation, petrochemicals, industrial engineering, electrical and electronic industries, food processing industries and mining.

According to Ghneim, the Islamic Chamber of Commerce was established in 1979 by the 40-member Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Local firms awarded contracts for 2 road projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Public Works and Housing Wednesday awarded two local firms contracts worth JD 13.2 million to build roads in the Kingdom.

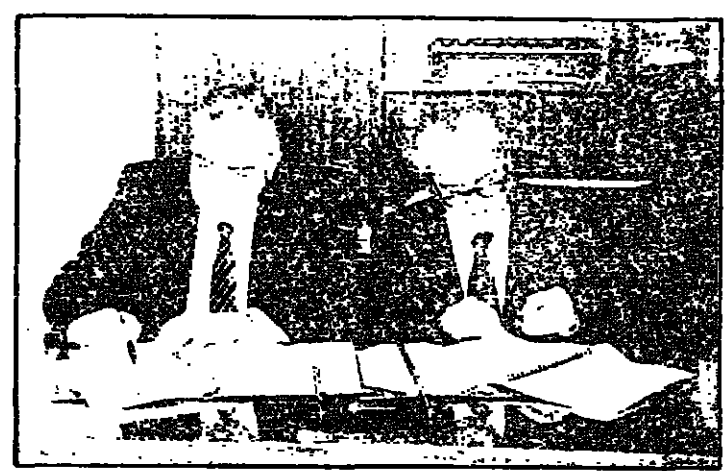
One of the contracts, worth JD 7 million, is for a six-kilometre stretch of a four-lane road linking Zay cross-roads with Kuffr Houdeh, a project which will be completed in two years, according to Minister of Public Works and Housing Shafiq Zawaideh who signed the contracts.

This scheme, Zawaideh said, constituted the first stage of the Salt-Arida Road, which is being implemented through a Japanese loan.

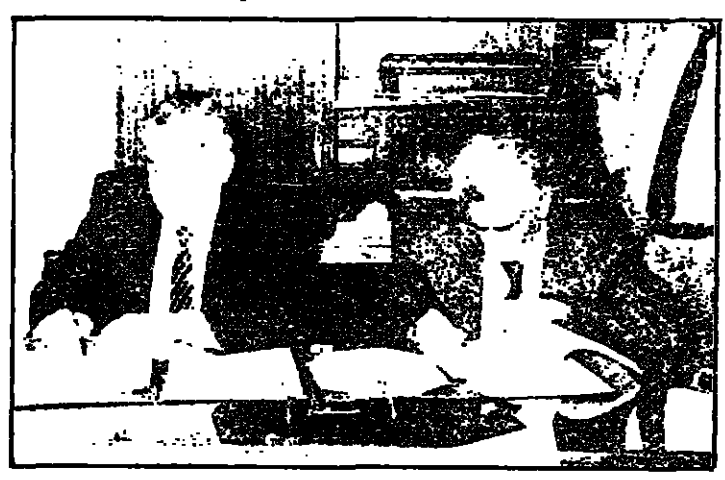
The other contract was for building a 60-kilometre stretch of road between Azraq, east of Amman, and the Iraqi border, according to the minister.

He said that the JD 6.2 million project is also being financed through the Japanese loan to the Kingdom.

Earlier this month, the minister signed contracts worth JD 24 million for roads to be built north of Jerash, and the first part of



Minister of Public Works and Housing Shafiq Zawaideh and representatives of two local firms Wednesday sign contracts for two road projects (Petra photo)



The Azraq-Iraqi border highway. The second contract signed Wednesday is for the implementation of the second stage of the Azraq-Iraqi border highway which is expected to be 240 kilometres long and will be completed in 24 months.

Streets get new names

AMMAN (Petra) — Greater Amman Municipal Committee Tuesday approved the recommendation of the naming and numbering committee, to name the street stretching from the Public Security Workshops to Yajuz Cross Road after Prince Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein.

The committee also approved the recommendation to name the new street linking Tareq Street, with Prince Abdullah Street after Her Royal Highness Princess Aishah Bint Al Hussein.

At a meeting chaired by Greater Amman Mayor Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh, the committee also approved the proposal made by the joint technical team in charge of drawing up the comprehensive development plan for Greater Amman.

Authorities rescue 71 from snow-covered roads

AMMAN (J.T.) — Local authorities in the Ma'an region are reported still involved in road-opening operations following the snowstorm that affected the area earlier this week.

Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that police and civil defence men, employing road equipment were able to rescue 71 passengers in three buses travelling on snow-covered roads. Petra said that the

rescued travellers included a number of tourists.

Thick snow had blocked roads near or around Eil, Wadi Mousa, Shobak and Manshih, as well as Ras Al Naqub Road which was Tuesday reopened for traffic.

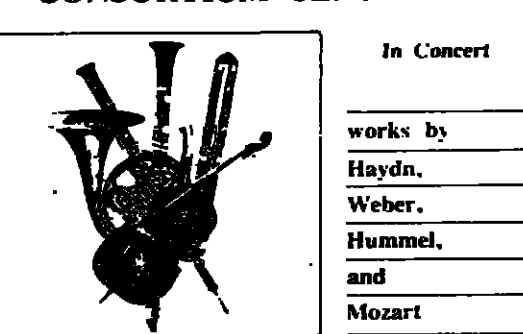
According to the Petra report, one of the buses was carrying students and their teachers along the Rajef-Eil Road.

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The National Music Conservatory / Noor Al Hussein Foundation

and Goethe Institut - Amman present

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Saturday, February 18, 1989 at 8:00 p.m.

Tickets at 5 JD's are available at:

The Royal Cultural Centre, Goethe Institut - Amman, The National Music Conservatory.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975

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Historic births

THE ARAB World is receiving two additional positive jolts that could very well go down in Arab history as monumental milestones. Both of these historic landmarks are scheduled to be announced today, Thursday, one in Baghdad announcing the birth of the Arab Cooperation Council comprising Iraq, Egypt, North Yemen and Jordan, and the other in Marrakesh announcing the creation of the Arab Maghreb Union between Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Mauritania.

The first serious Arab effort and success to achieve operational Arab unity was of course taken in the Arab Gulf region when the Gulf Cooperation Council was established in 1982 linking the six Gulf Arab countries in the first ever sub-regional unity framework that served as a springboard to the just declared networks of Arab unions in the Mashreq and Maghreb of the Arab World. And while the Baghdad and Marrakesh unions are being characterised as essentially economic, there is no doubt that Arab unity efforts cannot be one thing or another as economic and political considerations and objectives are organically inter-woven and essentially inseparable. It must be noticed that there has been a considerable meeting of mind on basic political as well as economic issues, regional or international, between GCC states. Such political and economic consensus among Iraq, Egypt, North Yemen and Jordan has been nurtured and developed over the past many years and is now strong enough to withstand all forms of regional and international pressures or threats. And on the edifice of this shared outlook, the present Arab Cooperation Council was constructed with relative ease and harmony.

Reading through the Charter of the Arab Cooperation Council would readily reveal that the vision of the heads of state of the four Arab countries is of historic proportions and draws heavily on the past glorious Arab history, as well as on futuristic bright projections that could put the Arab World on equal footing with other regional groupings in other parts of the world. Such is indeed the path to take if the Arab World is serious about resolving its conflicts with the other regions, be it in the form of Israel or Iran. Anything short of this road would lead us nowhere as the past history has taught us.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Jordanian newspapers Wednesday tackled the Arab Cooperation Council which is to group North Yemen, Iraq, Egypt and Jordan and for which the prime ministers of the four countries had held discussions in Amman Tuesday. Al Ra'i daily described the alliance as part of the pan-Arab order, and serving as a nucleus for a greater Arab grouping. The council will set the stage for further joint action on the part of Arab countries and offer a new arena for more serious cooperation for the benefit of all Arab states, the paper noted. It said that the new development was bound to help the Arab Nation to confront the challenges, and would enhance the Arab struggle to regain usurped lands in Palestine and re-establish a genuine peace. The four-member council came to achieve the aspirations of the Arab masses in unity and stronger economic future for the Arab Nation, the paper noted. It said that this alliance will render further strength to the Arabs and will no doubt back the oppressed Palestinian people's struggle for freedom.

Writing in Al Ra'i, columnist Abdul Rahim Omar says that the Amman and Baghdad meetings will be remembered in history as having paved the way for unity through the efforts of the leaders of the four Arab countries. It is indeed hoped that the formation of the Arab Cooperation Council will lead towards a Pan Arab unity which will be strong in the face of challenges and will end all forms of divisions and weaknesses. The leaders of the four countries meeting in Baghdad will have no doubt realised the need for a united Arab force, since the world now can only deal with the strong; and that the other nations respect only those which can offer genuine efforts towards the advancement of human kind, the writer notes. He says that the Europeans have transcended all their past differences and forgotten all about the two world wars for the sake of uniting their power and pooling their resources for the future. It is natural for the Arabs, the writer adds, to come together and chart plans for their future economic cooperation.

Al Dustour, for its part, said that the four prime ministers meeting here were overwhelmed with joyful feelings as they embarked on their national task of paving the way for their four states to pool their efforts and their economic resources. The paper said that Amman witnessed a historic meeting that aimed to unite the Arab states into a strong economic entity. The economic alliance is indeed a very important factor and an essential component for a pan-Arab unity which can be achieved at a later stage, the paper said. It added that the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Maghreb alliance will both complement the work of the four countries and help to pave the way for the aspired unity. The paper said that the four member alliance is open to all Arab countries, and it is thus a forum for all those wishing to contribute towards the Arab Nation's progress.

Sawt Al Shaab daily described the economic alliance grouping Jordan and three Arab countries as a guarantee for the challenges of the future and an embodiment of the aspirations of Arab masses. The paper said that there is no doubt that the Arab Nation is in dire need of this form of unity which is accentuated through economic integration and bolstered through genuine and serious work for the benefit of the Arab masses. The meetings in Amman and Baghdad, said the paper, should induce renewed hope in the hearts of all Arabs in general because they are meant to lay the foundation for a brighter future for the Arab Nation.

Beware of bear, eagle playing chess

By P.V. Vivekanand

THE last Soviet soldier has packed up and left Afghanistan after a 10-year turgid, reaffirming the dramatic shift in Kremlin policy towards regional conflicts — inter alia, superpower relations — and signalling an end to a problem that seriously undermined Moscow's relations with the Muslim World. Let's reserve judgement on whether the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan was a dignified exit or a forced flight in panic, or whether the Communists or the rebels will gain the upper hand in the country. We can only hope against hope that the Afghan people will be able, sooner or later, to arrive at some form of compromise and national reconciliation that would avert further bloodbath and misery for themselves; it seems an unlikely course of events at this point, given the building infighting between the rebels and the apparent determination of Kabul to hang on to power at any cost. Rivers of blood will flood in Afghanistan before any order could be restored.

But, preoccupied as we are with the Arab-Israeli conflict, we cannot but ask one question: What does the Afghan development hold in store for efforts to settle the Middle East problem, where the other superpower is heavily involved?

For one thing, the Soviet departure from Afghanistan, coupled with the impending solutions to the Namibia and Kampuchea problems, has thickened the Kremlin's seriousness in disentangling itself from direct involvement in regional conflicts. It has sent a loud and clear message to the international community that the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev is no longer the "red devil" and the "evil empire" as some world leaders had portrayed it to be.

This in itself should be a comforting thought for the staunch anti-Communist camp around the world, including Washington,

and should go a long way in alleviating the so-called fears that the Russian bear is lurking round the corner in the Middle East to devour everything in sight at the first given opportunity, which the U.S. has all along been very careful not to offer.

The clearest yet sign of Soviet seriousness towards finding a just settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict came this week when Moscow announced its Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's five-state Middle East visit starting Feb. 19. Following so closely on the heels of the Soviet military disengagement from Afghanistan, the Shevardnadze visit could also be seen as a Soviet drive to enlist Arab support in efforts to attain the declared aim of making Afghanistan a non-aligned state, free from fundamentalist tendencies at the leadership level. With the fiery Iranian brand of fundamentalism just across its southern border, the Soviet Union is anxious not to have similar waves from the southeast and add to the simmering religious unrest in its republics.

It is only natural to expect Moscow to exert its own political leverage in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict to help its own political strategy in Afghanistan, including diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia, the staunchest Arab supporter of the Afghan Mujahideen's cause. The Soviets have sought help from Arab states, including Jordan, in the past to find an Afghan settlement and there is no doubt they would again put forward a "you-scratch-my-back-I-scratch-yours" proposal since it is far too obvious that Afghanistan is such a strategic prize that Moscow would not let go easily to a fundamentalist camp, or worse still, the Western camp.

At the same time, one has to ponder what will be the pound of flesh that the U.S. and Israel demand in return for a realistic Soviet involvement in the Middle East peace process, which, by extension, is linked to whatever plans Moscow has for Afghanistan. Resumption of diplomatic relations with Israel? A firm and irrevocable commitment to pull all plugs from Jewish emigra-

tion? For all we know, Israel might even insist on a treaty of "friendship" to bind the Soviets in a way that would prevent Moscow from building closer military ties with the Arab states, thus forestalling future military scenarios. Rather a heavy price, isn't it? And for what in exchange? Palestinian "autonomy" and a reenacted version of Camp David, as the Israeli leadership has in mind?

Simply put, the scenario appears to be: The Soviets want Arab help in Afghanistan and will, in return, exert a hefty effort to find Arab-Israeli peace. For their part, Israel and the U.S. will hold out for as many Arab and Soviet concessions as possible before agreeing to seriously consider even their own version of a just and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict. Caught in the middle is the Arab cause in Palestine; and the heroic people in the occupied territories, who have been waging a war of stones for the past 15 months, will pay the price in terms of their aspirations to independence and self-determination.

While we can draw comfort from the fact that the Soviet ideology, as we have seen in the past, will not stand for such kind of a "deal" in the Middle East, particularly that Moscow has repeatedly affirmed its unequivocal support for the Palestinian people's rights, including the rights of statehood and self-determination, it would be putting all our eggs in one basket if we were to depend solely on Soviet commitment to the Arab cause. That is precisely why an active international involvement is so vital to Middle East peace efforts, if only to avert the Arab cause being turned a dispensable pawn in the superpower chessboard. That is why Jordan has always called for European and non-aligned involvement in the peace process leading to an international conference attended by the five permanent members of the Security Council.

Charter of the Arab Cooperation Council:

Economic integration for the benefit of the Arab Nation

Following is the text of the Arab Cooperation Council's (ACC) statute as proposed by Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and North Yemen:

Preamble

The Arab Nation with its rich Arab culture and with a major role to play in human civilisation looks forward towards cooperation, solidarity and joint action in all fields. The nation is motivated towards this goal by a deep feeling towards unity, a desire to project its national entity through its cultural identity and to protect its security and safeguard its legitimate interests, and to pursue its relentless efforts to achieve progress and prosperity and enhance its positive and constructive role in the world in order to serve peace and security causes and to contribute towards cooperation and advancement and fruitful cooperation among world nations.

The Arab Nation has gone through numerous experiences in joint action, cooperation and solidarity and has achieved some forms of unity and learned lessons with positive and negative elements; foremost among these lessons was cooperation in areas which corroborate spiritual, cultural ties among members of the Arab countries. This cooperation is continuously sought through joint action because it constitutes the main and basic foundation for the attainment of higher goals and the fulfilment of the Arab Nation's most sublime of aspirations, pan-Arab unity. The present trend among world nations is the formation of economic groups and blocs which provide a great measure to protection for national interests and contribute towards the attainment of development and economic progress.

The Arab countries believe that cooperation in these fields assume added importance in view of the threats posed to the Arab Nation's security politically, economically and culturally. This had been obvious in the Iranian aggression on Iran and the continued Israeli threats to the Arab Nation.

The Arab Nation believes that the Iraqi victory in the Gulf war was partially achieved as a result of the pan-Arab awareness and deep faith in the national unity of the Arabs and the requirements for national security. In addition the Arab Nation believes that the prevalence of security, peace and stability in the region requires a strengthening of this awareness among Arab people through practical cooperation, coordination and pan-Arab solidarity on the basis of collective security and its prerequisites and requirements.

As Jordan, Egypt, North Yemen and Iraq are linked together under similar circumstances and since these countries have a deep faith in the principles and values aforementioned, and in expression of the deep desire on the part of these countries to find practical and realistic means to corroborate and develop formulas for inter cooperation which had been going on for a number of years yielding good results, and acting upon a feeling of responsibility towards enhancing the elements of pan-Arab security against current or future threats, and based on the provisions of an agreement reached at the historic meeting in Baghdad between Feb. 15 and 16 between His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan, President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, President Mohammad Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and President Ali Abdullah Saleh of North Yemen, the four countries decided on the following:

Article one

The Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) will be established from Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and North Yemen in accordance with the provisions contained in this agreement. The ACC will be considered as one of the Arab Nation's organisations which will be committed to the charter of the Arab League and the joint defence pact and the economic cooperation agreements as well as the various other organisations affiliated to the Arab League.

Article two

The ACC aims to:

Achieve the highest possible levels of coordination, coopera-

tion, integration and solidarity among the four members specially in the economic, financial, customs, industrial, agricultural and trade fields and in facilitating the flow of capital and easing transport and communications and telecommunications operations between them and to promote their cooperation in scientific research, the exchange of expertise and experience in education, culture, social affairs, health, tourism and allow for employment, transportation and residence in these countries. The ACC will also seek to achieve an Arab common market and an Arab economic unity and will boost inter-Arab action and strengthen inter-Arab relations.

Article three

The ACC will aim to achieve its objectives through plans and practical measures including the prospect of unifying legislations in all fields.

Article four

ACC membership will be open to all Arab countries wishing to join. Membership to the ACC will be pending approval by two thirds of the ACC members provided the founding members would give approval.

Article five

The ACC will be formed from: a higher council; a ministerial council and a general secretariat.

Article six

The higher council will group heads of state of ACC members and will be considered as the highest authority.

Article seven

The ACC's higher council will be entrusted to draw up the ACC's higher policies, decide on matters related to resolutions submitted to it by the ministerial council, entrust the ministerial council to look into different matters of its jurisdiction, endorse principles of and procedures for the ACC's functions and amendments, appoint ACC's secretary general and introduce changes and form committees whenever they are needed.

Article eight

The higher council will hold ordinary meetings once a year in any of the ACC member states on a periodic basis to be chaired by the head of the hosting state. But extraordinary meetings can be called by the higher council or at the request of any member state backed by another. The extraordinary meetings will be held in the country whose head is the head of higher council at the time. The higher council meetings will be considered valid if the majority members attend.

Article nine

The ministerial committee comprises heads of governments in the ACC member states.

Article ten

The ministerial committee will:

1. Study issues within its jurisdiction.
2. Prepare and submit plans, proposals and recommendations to the higher council.
3. Take practical measures to implement the higher council's decisions.
4. Study any matter related to cooperation and refer issues to specialised committees which can submit proposals.

5. Prepare principles for the work of the ACC and submit it to the higher council for endorsement.

6. Endorse and amend administrative, and financial regulations referred to it by the general secretariat upon a decision to be taken by the majority of the ACC members and which will be binding for all.

7. Discuss and approve the secretariat's budget and report on the final accounts as well as the administrative financial reports.

8. Set up temporary committees as needed.

Article eleven

The higher council holds ordinary meetings once every six months. The council's sessions will be chaired by the head of government of the state whose head is chairman for that year. The head of the ministerial council has the right to hold extraordinary meetings. The higher council meetings will be valid if the majority members are present.

Article 12

The ACC member states seek to achieve consensus and agreement in all resolutions but if this is not possible, resolutions will be taken by majority of voices and the decisions will be binding for all.

Article 13

1. Amman will host the headquarters of the ACC's general secretariat to be headed by a secretary general supervising the work of staff.

2. The higher council will select the secretary general from among the citizens of the ACC member states based on the criteria of personal efficiency and commitment to the achievement of the ACC's objectives. The secretary general will serve for two years subject to be renewed for another term.

3. The secretariat's staff will be selected from the ACC member states.

4. The secretary general and main staff members will enjoy immunity and privileges necessary to help them to discharge their duties.

Article 14

The secretary general is the higher executive member of the secretariat and he will be directly responsible before the higher ministerial council about the secretariat's work. The secretary general will be required to follow up the implementation of resolutions passed by the higher council and the decisions of the ministerial council. He will prepare reports on the ACC activities to be submitted to the higher and ministerial council. He will prepare a draft budget and final accounts of the ACC. He will appoint staff to the ACC's general secretariat. He will suggest administrative and financial regulations and submit them to the higher council.

Article 15

The secretary general will conclude an agreement over the ACC's headquarters on behalf of the ACC council.

Article 16

The general secretariat will prepare the ACC's annual budget in which the ACC member states will be required to share.

Article 17

This agreement will be binding and come into effect as of the date of its endorsement by the four heads of the state. The agreement will be regarded as binding to all nations joining the ACC in accordance with Article Four.

Turkey squirms in NATO's nuclear embrace

By Maryam Schiller

ANKARA, Turkey — Opposition to storage and deployment of NATO nuclear weapons in Turkey has accompanied calls for development of the country's conventional forces and armaments industry.

Turkey is known to hold unspecified numbers of nuclear weapons as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. The details of its arsenal, usually under the U.S. air force command, have never been revealed. However, in recent years domestic opposition to NATO's nuclear presence in Turkey has grown in the country as has resistance by government circles to any further modernisation or deployment of NATO nuclear weapons based in Turkey.

The opposition gained strength after the Soviet-American treaty on the removal of intermediate-range missiles from Europe. Prime Minister Turgut Ozal said in January that no further nuclear

commitments will be accepted by Turkey.

His comment was in response to suggestions that the NATO Supreme Allied Commander for Europe (SACEUR), General John Galvin, had proposed modernisation of the nuclear arsenal in each of the NATO countries. However, in the January comment, Ozal said that Turkey had not been asked about further nuclear commitments to the North Atlantic alliance.

The debate over Turkey's nuclear commitment — not to be confused, say analysts, with a nuclear capability — is a sensitive subject in the country. The nuclear weapons in Turkey are mostly tactical, military sources say, and they are deployed at NATO bases run in conjunction with the United States Army and Air Force, which have about 5,000 servicemen in the country.

Turkey can't use these weapons on its own. Although in theory either Turkey or NATO can use the weapons with mutual

concurrence, few officials privately expect the United States or the alliance to concur in the hypothetical event of Turkey deciding to use the weapons against an adversary.

"While it is a welcome safety valve, it nevertheless proves that Turkey shares its sovereignty with NATO as far as the 'nukes' are concerned," a Western diplomat said.

Professor Mehmet Gönülbul, chairman of the foreign relations department in the political science faculty of Ankara University, said recently that the Soviet-American treaty had raised new issues over Europe's defence and the NATO members' responsibilities.

After the removal of the intermediate range missiles from Europe, he said, the European governments had been troubled by the question whether the United States would come to Europe's assistance if it were attacked. The U.S. response to that worry had been to suggest

that NATO update its tactical weapons, said Gönülbul.

If the proposal in fact has been made, he said, Turkey would be one of the countries where modernisation or updating of the existing tactical weapons would become necessary. "Turkey also has these tactical nuclear weapons, although how many and what kind has never been disclosed," said Gönülbul.

However, Gönülbul indicated that he belongs to the overwhelming opinion in the country which favours development of Turkey's conventional forces rather than its nuclear strength under the NATO/American umbrella. "The presence of nuclear weapons in Turkey naturally increases the possibility of facing a nuclear strike," he said.

Turkish opponents of a further nuclear deployment in the country or modernisation of the existing forces maintain that other European members of the alliance share Turkey's anxiety.

The modernisation of weapons "may cause a nuclear escalation in Europe, because the East will do the same thing," said Gönülbul. "A nuclear war could start in Western Europe and Turkey and destroy the countries as well as the people."

"Instead," he said, "we should try to eliminate all nuclear weapons, because as long as we have these weapons there is the possibility of being involved in a nuclear war."

But Western military experts feel convinced that Turkey has painted itself in a corner by agreeing to house the NATO nuclear weapons. Despite Turkey's close proximity to the Soviet Union and its strategic importance as NATO's southern flank and window on the Middle East, these experts feel that the United States feels no incentive to fund development of Turkey's conventional forces. As Gönülbul said, "It is easier and cheaper to update the nuclear weapons."

Few Turkish analysts see an easy way for Turkey out of the present quagmire. The road to conventional military development is a long one. "Turkey's moment is very much dependent on the West for the technology and funds to upgrade its defence industry. Up to now, funds for this purpose have been spent irrationally," said Gönülbul.

If Turkey is serious about resisting NATO pressures for modernisation or additional development of nuclear forces, it must make heavy sacrifices to develop its independent conventional capability. Few experts see the possibility of this happening. Nor do any informed analysts in Ankara seriously believe that Ozal will be able to resist the pressure of NATO. "It is impossible for Turkey to get out of its present nuclear commitment unless a global agreement is reached for the elimination of all nuclear weapons," said Academic File.



Women of the Arab World are often misunderstood in the West, where too few are prepared to consider the person behind the veil.



Bouthaina Shaaban: Women are becoming conscious of their rights.



Egypt: The birth of a baby boy is a cause for major celebration.

Shades of Arabian women

Five years ago feminists of the Middle East were predicting great achievements would have been recorded in the region by the end of the decade. Yet, despite much fine rhetoric from a variety of sources about the need for change and the intention to effect change, little in the way of real progress has actually been recorded. Is the "new" Arab woman we hear about a widespread phenomenon or does the term refer to those much vaunted, isolated examples such as the Jordanian woman who was the first female to fly a commercial TriStar jet or the Kuwaiti woman who was appointed Dean of the country's Faculty of Law? The not inconsiderable achievements of these women were a talking point half a decade ago — but if real progress in sexual equality is being made, surely some new heroines should, by now, be emerging.

By Pat Lancaster

THE fate of the Arab women is often portrayed by the western media in the role of eternal submission — driven from her home by exile and war; commanded by fundamentalist Islam to cover her face with the veil and always to obey her husband and father. Yet that is not what Syrian-born Bouthaina Shaaban, found when she set out to talk to Arab women with the purpose of writing a book. She found scholars and freedom fighters, poets and mothers of martyrs — intelligent, spirited and often angry women, organising themselves to challenge the shape of the world they inherit. Bouthaina Shaaban talked to Pat Lancaster.

"Things are moving gradually for Arab women but they are moving in the right direction. Women are becoming more conscious of their own rights and individuality. They no longer consider themselves as just being their husband's wife, their father's daughter or their brother's sister, but there is still a long way to go," according to Bouthaina Shaaban, author of *Both Right and Left Handed*, in which Palestinian, Syrian, Algerian and Lebanese women speak of their own experiences in the male dominated society of the Middle East.

The idea for the book came to Bouthaina Shaaban during a visit to London in 1982. It was the long, intense summer of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Television brought ever more unbelievable scenes of horror and carnage into homes around the world; each day pictures of the dead and dying were featured alongside the ruined and broken buildings of a once sophisticated, cosmopolitan city, until most of us were numbed to the violence and destruction. Pregnant with her first child, the author's grief for the mothers of Beirut, for the Lebanese in the bombarded city and the Palestinians in the refugee camps set her thinking about the fate of women in struggles they do not control, and as victims of violence they do not initiate. "Then, a year later, I saw Lebanese and Palestinian women dry their tears, dress their wounds and pick up guns, to surprise the world with their heroic effort to fight back. Those women defied every stereotype of the passive, complaint Arab woman. They were not the dutiful wives and daughters, that we had been taught, the Prophet demanded, and that the law demands in many Arab countries. I resolved to learn something about my own people.

Love and admiration

Intervening little in her inter-

views with Palestinian, Syrian, Algerian and Lebanese women from all social classes, the author wanted them to speak for themselves, to tell their own stories in their own way. "I hoped by this means to enable other Arab women and Western women to hear for themselves the voices of these women — fighters and professionals, politicians and peasants, devoted wives and faithful mothers of martyrs... The accounts of these women filled me with love and admiration for my own sex. I found women to be brave fighters, bold thinkers, uncompromising partisans, affectionate mothers, great friends, and mostly unselfish in their attitudes and beliefs. Behind the facade of a 'weak' sex I discovered courageous, original minds and principled moral values. What we women need most of all, I concluded, is the chance to discover each other, in order to take our true place in this world that has so far been moulded by men."

Born and raised in Syria, Bouthaina Shaaban has had personal experience of some of the difficulties of growing up female in a society where gender is often the paramount consideration, where being male is frequently more important than either intelligence or academic capability.

Crimes of honour

Shaaban recalls in her book how, as a schoolgirl in 1968, she was horrified by the sight of a classmate, Aziz, dancing about in the centre of the village, waving a dagger dripping with blood and chanting: "I've killed her and saved the family's honour." Aziz had committed a so-called 'crime of honour' by murdering his unmarried, pregnant sister Yemen. But far from being ashamed of his foul deed her brother dipped his hands in the warm innocent blood and went into the streets triumphantly to publicly celebrate the cleansing of his 'honour'.

Since burial ceremonies are not usually allowed for the victims of 'crimes of honour' any respect shown towards the dead body would be construed as condoning the victim's ignoble act, Shaaban explains. Thus, young children were asked to pull the body to the graveyard at the other end of the village. The image of the scene, portrayed by the author is a sickeningly powerful one: "Children were pulling her by the hair, throwing big stones at her misshapen, pregnant abdomen and spitting at her. On our way back from school we saw the naked body still lying in the graveyard like a dead sheep. None of us dared show the slightest sign of pity..." Yemen was 16 when her brother slit her throat. He was imprisoned for six months to emerge

from prison with "a mysterious heroic air." Shortly after his release he travelled to the Gulf States to get some money together. "When he came back he opened up a bakery in the village and started feeding the village people with bread made with the same hands that had cut his sister's throat and had been dipped in her blood."

My first question to Bouthaina Shaaban was about Yemen. Was the story true I asked incredulously? Yes, perfectly true, she assured me and even though Yemen's death occurred more than 20 years ago the same thing is happening in rural areas of the Arab world in 1988. The murders are still considered 'crimes of honour' and the penalty paid by the murderer, if at all, is still pitifully small.

Bouthaina left the village and was awarded a grant to continue her education at university in Damascus. On completion of her B.A., she was offered a grant to do postgraduate studies in Britain. It was while studying for a Ph.D. at Warwick University in England she was to meet her future husband, Khalil, an Iraqi Ph.D. student. However, her father and older brothers were most unhappy with the proposed match. The issue came to a head when the young couple went to visit Bouthaina's family home in Syria. Dr. Shaaban recalls: "After meeting the man I chose they desperately wanted me to abandon him, ostensibly because of the differences in our nationalities and religions. These two issues, however, were only the pretext for something more serious. The real problem was that I was the first woman they had known to choose her husband quite independently of her father's and brother's wishes. Although all my older brothers got married to women of their own choice, and invited my father as a guest to their wedding ceremonies, they denied me the same right because of the stark fact that they were men and I was a woman."

Psychological hardship

The relationship with Khalil was to result in great psychological hardship for Bouthaina. "I suffered nightmares about what my father might do to me for disobeying him. He started to admonish me with an unstoppable flood of horrid letters. I remember leaving his letters for days, too frightened to open them. They were mostly threats that he would kill me wherever I was, if I didn't obey his injunction

to give up Khalil. My brothers and sisters also wrote me letters begging me to leave this man, because by then my father had started to threaten my younger sister Nahid (who was close to me) saying he would kill her instead of me if she didn't manage to convince me to give up the idea of marrying Khalil."

Presented with an ultimatum to give up the man of her choice or give up her family, Bouthaina chose to marry Khalil, a decision which was to isolate her from her father and mother for seven years. In fact she says, it was only after *Both Right and Left Handed* was published that contact was resumed. It is typical of her generosity of spirit she now feels her anguish was not in vain. "In a way I became a pioneer for a younger generation which reaped the fruits of my sacrifice. One of my younger sisters, for example, just had to name the man she chose to marry to be given my father's blessing and many wonderful presents besides."

In spite of her own sad experiences Bouthaina maintains that Arab women are far better off than the west perceives them to be. "Sadly the western impression is still very much that of somebody wearing the veil and buying up Harrods. They do not see Arab women as they really are, wives, mothers and home-makers but also informed and enlightened people who frequently hold down responsible jobs in farming, education, politics and law."

Arab women have a great strength in their deeply rooted feelings of sisterly solidarity, Dr. Shaaban believes. "In the Arab world there is a lot of solidarity but it is not organised. Arab women are extremely supportive to each other on a personal level, praising each other's achievements and helping each other when they can, in all sorts of areas. There is a great deal of solidarity but it is not organised. In the west women have official workshops where issues are debated, they hold meetings — there is a structure. This is the kind of thing Arab women need to work at. We have a women's union and feminists get together. There is an official organisation in Algeria and the attitude of, for example, the Syrian government towards women is excellent but in overall regional terms there is still a long way to go and much to be done. What we need most of all is a change of attitude. There aren't laws against women as such but general attitudes prevent them attaining their potential."

Archetypal image

Dr. Shaaban believes that the archetypal image of the western feminist has had a counter-productive effect in the countries of the Middle East. "There is an idea — an idea promoted by men — of the western feminist as a sexually promiscuous, irresponsible sort of woman, the kind who doesn't really care about her family or children. I would like to see this idea, that feminism and immorality go hand in hand, stamped out completely. Most feminists are also loving wives and mothers. Losing our families should not be the price we have to pay for our beliefs."

"Arab women have an age-old fear of not performing well in what they do. If they run a home and hold down a career at the same time, then they bear a double burden," Dr. Shaaban points out, recalling an incident which illustrates the point. "I was frequently envied by neighbours and relatives for my helpful and very understanding husband and my life with him... my husband, would take our then only daughter to her nursery school, help with the shopping, cleaning and cooking. Yet, if I put the food on the table a few degrees hotter or cooler than he wanted, we would have a row. In my book I mention my feelings when in the middle of giving a lecture on the Romantic Poets, attended by a multitude of students, I suddenly remembered that I had not removed the meat for the evening meal from the freezer. I suddenly stopped as if struck by lightning; the words jammed in my mouth, my colour must have changed and, judging by the way I felt, my heart must have stopped as well. It was already 12 o'clock and I had forgotten to take the meat out of the freezer when I left home that morning. The problem was not, of course, that I would have nothing to eat — that was the least important part; my real quandary was what I was going to say to my husband now that he had yet more proof of my 'incompetence', 'carelessness' and 'unorganised mind'."

During the course of her research for *Both Right and Left Handed*, Dr. Shaaban discovered that although women have become professionals and politicians and have excelled in many fields, at home they are still considered the weaker sex, and are frequently expected to act as servants. "In fact, the more successful the woman is in her profession, the greater is the pressure exerted on her at home to prove that she is

still a 'woman' with connotations of 'weak, docile and feminine', she notes. However, sadder still is the way many women react to this reasonable pressure. "I found that these women, who, for the most part, had rich experiences and valuable thoughts, were fettered by their own fears

of seeming odd or ridiculous, or of jeopardising their chances of a happy family life if they didn't behave according to inherited social traditions."

There is a widespread feeling in the region — propagated by male 'hypocrites' that "just because women go out to work, to school

or to university, they are now fully liberated and independent. The aim of these hypocrites is to make women feel grateful for the slight progress they have made and to stop them going beyond this. Yet the real battle has only just begun," warns Dr. Shaaban. — *The Middle East*.

Cures for aging?

By Jim Fuller

WASHINGTON — U.S. pharmaceutical firms are in the process of developing more than 200 new medicines to treat heart disease, osteoporosis, Alzheimer's disease and other illnesses that plague older people, according to recent surveys.

The Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, in cooperation with organisations like the American Cancer Society and the Arthritis Foundation, conducted a series of surveys of pharmaceutical companies to identify medicines for the elderly now in human tests or awaiting approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The series is called "New Medicines for Older Americans."

"We identified 221 medicines in clinical trials by 77 companies to treat 23 diseases," Gerald Mossinghoff, president of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, told reporters Jan. 31. "That is a significant number that promises to push back the treatment frontiers for these diseases in the next decade."

Mossinghoff estimated that \$3,600 million, about half of the pharmaceutical industry's research and development budget in 1989, will go toward research on diseases that primarily afflict older people.

The surveys show that cardiovascular disease leads all others as a target for research spending and drugs in development. Some 26 per cent of all research funds go toward drugs for use against heart disease, hypertension and stroke.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, particularly among older persons. And although the death rate from cardiovascular disease has dropped 41 per cent in the past 20 years, the aging of the population is expected to result in increased incidence of cardiovascular disease, according to the surveys.

Cancer drugs are the second largest category of drugs in development for older people, with 65 such drugs now in human testing primarily for colon, breast and lung cancers. Mossinghoff

said that 29 per cent of the anti-cancer drugs have been developed through biotechnology, a technique that uses living organisms to make or modify products.

"Biotechnology has become important to cancer research because it helps explain how cancers develop in the body and enables researchers to boost the body's immune system to fight cancers," he said.

Mossinghoff said research is also strong in medicines for diseases that often result in loss of independence for older persons, such as Alzheimer's disease, arthritis, osteoporosis and Parkinson's disease. The studies show that 48 companies are developing 69 new drugs that will treat nine diseases that often cripple and disable the elderly.

John Beary, the association's senior vice president for science and technology, said significant strides are being made in developing treatments for osteoporosis, a disease in which the bones become too thin and brittle to bear the body's weight. About 24 million women over age 45 suffer from osteoporosis in the United States.

Although 10 drugs for treating osteoporosis are under development, a new sodium fluoride drug now awaiting FDA approval for

marketing has been found to half the progress of spinal osteoporosis and restore lost bone mass at rates of up to 6 per cent a year.

Clinical trials over the last five years have shown the experimental therapy to have a low rate of adverse side effects. If approved for general use, experts report that it would be the first treatment to restore bone mass for any form of osteoporosis.

Beary said 15 medicines are in development for Alzheimer's disease, with three of the drugs now in the third and final stage of human trials. The disease, in which mental functions slowly deteriorate, afflicts about 2.5 million people in the United States, killing more than 100,000 last year alone.

"It is truly the death of the mind," Beary said. "The burden on the family... can lead to marital problems and bankruptcy. There are no medications available that reverse the progression."

He said six drugs are in development for Parkinson's disease, with one being considered for approval by the FDA. The disease, marked by tremors, rigidity and an abnormal gait, afflicts more than a million people over 65 in the United States. — *USIA*.



Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, particularly among older persons.

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Just in time



The souk in Marrakesh.



A Moroccan boy in the Marrakesh souk plays a string instrument.

Marrakesh: a paradise rediscovered

Marrakesh, historic former capital and holy city to many, has assumed new importance after the recent talks there between King Hassan and Polisario Front guerrillas.

By Ali Drissi Sebt
MARRAKESH — From the crowds of the packed souks of Marrakesh, Western Sahara seems remote. But since the January meeting between King Hassan and the Polisario Front, which raised the possibility of an end of the costly war in the former Spanish colony, the ancient capital city has assumed a new political importance.

"In the pecking order of Moroccan cities, one can say that Marrakesh now comes right after Rabat and Casablanca," said a diplomatic visitor. "It's no longer just a point of convergence for tourists looking for fun and sunshine." In touristic delights, of course, Marrakesh must still compete with Fez, Tangier and Agadir along with Rabat and Casa.

The king's visit and the sitting of such a historic peace session in Marrakesh put it on the map for thousands of Moroccans who have witnessed with some regret the relegation of the city to "less

than its deserved status as an imperial capital," as one prominent citizen put it.

If all goes well, the city of less than a million permanent residents may again become the scene of high diplomacy if the plans for a Maghreb summit bringing together the leaders of Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Morocco materialise in mid-February.

Although officials have maintained that Marrakesh is no less important than it was under previous dynasties, when it was the capital, the residents of Marrakesh have found it difficult to come to terms with the city's secondary status. "There's only one Marrakesh," said one shopkeeper. "It is the best, the greatest and the richest city of Morocco."

Indeed the city's fame is varied. While many Moroccans, and certainly the tourist guides remind a visitor that Marrakesh lives up to its title, *Al Bahja*, the

City of Delight, in the conservative corridors of the souks and the hushed environs of numerous mosques, the same guides are wont to point out Marrakesh is also a holy city, nicknamed *Madinat Sabat ur Rijal*, or the City of Seven Saints. The mosques and shrines across the red sprawl of the city, overlooked by the Atlas mountain range, attest to that reputation.

10 centuries expansion

Through 10 centuries of expansion, neglect and rejuvenation, Marrakesh has seen at least three major "boom" eras: from the late 11th century to the middle of the 13th with the Al Mowarid and Al Mohad dynasties; from the 16th to the 17th century with the Saadi and, finally, from the 18th century onward with the Alawi dynasty.

As early as the 12th century, Ali Ibn Youssef brought water to Marrakesh and paved roads and built the mosque that still carries his name and lies at the heart of the medina, or central quarter. Under subsequent rulers, Marrakesh acquired new fortifica-

tions and monuments and attracted visitors and scholars from all corners of the Muslim world.

It was a time of great upheaval in Spain, the northern neighbour in Europe, with the Umayyad decline and its social and political consequences. Morocco thrived under the puritanical Al Mowarid and Al Mohad rulers and its capital, Marrakesh, radiated political power and cultural influence across the whole of North Africa and southern Europe, particularly Spain.

The city was abandoned as a capital after the fall of Al Mohads and relapsed into a period of decline until the growth of trade between the Maghreb and Europe once again revived it in the 16th century.

For many years Marrakesh vied with Fez for the position of Morocco's premier city and benefited hugely from the reign of Sidi Mohammed Ibn Abdallah (1757-1790). The monarch surrounded himself with scribes and experts of all persuasions and the result of that period was a proliferation of palaces, gardens, mosques and madrasahs. This tradition was continued under the reign of Sidi Mohammed Ibn Abderrahman.

One of the greatest monuments, now in ruins, was the palace of Al Badi that Sultan Ahmad Al Mansour took some 16 years to build. The 500-column palace in the Qashbah was visited by numerous diplomatic travellers from Europe and elsewhere who chronicled its splendour.

Although the Moroccan government has made strenuous efforts recently to restore the landmarks of Marrakesh, residents of the city feel that more can be done to make the city cleaner and more liveable. The old town and the area surrounding the public square, Jemaa el Fna, a magnet for hawkers, buskers and conjurers as well as visitors, is in need of considerable improvement.

"The souks are full of wonders but they can certainly be improved without losing their authenticity," said an oldtime resident.

The influx of tourists in recent years has changed the skyline of Marrakesh as new hotels have sprung up. But residents feel that public housing also has to come into line with the improvement in tourist facilities. — Academic File.



The main courtyard of the Ali Ibn Youssef complex of mosques and madrasahs in Marrakesh.

Armenia's children: a study lesson on survival

By Andrew Katel
The Associated Press

LENINKAN, USSR — Inside a green army tent, about 20 Armenian children now study math and the virtues of Communism under a bare light bulb. A small coal-fired furnace offers warmth that a killer earthquake took away two months ago.

The children in what is now Leninakan's school no. 7 don't need to look far to remind themselves of Dec. 7, the day the earth shook and introduced a new lesson, one on survival. Their former school lies in ruins just over a hill.

The children are among tens of thousands of people who never left or have returned since the

earthquake smashed northwestern Armenia with a blow of 6.9 on the Richter scale.

Of the half-million people left homeless, some 100,000 — mostly women, children and the elderly — were evacuated. Those who remain live in tents, mobile homes and in the few remaining habitable buildings. They shop for food in surprisingly well-stocked stores and receive government benefits.

After recovering about 25,000 bodies, 15,000 in Leninakan alone, workers have moved on to clearing and rebuilding Armenia, which the government says will take two years. The Kremlin says the quake cost at least \$16.1 billion.

Broken concrete and twisted

pipes have been dumped along roads leading to the city, Armenia's second largest.

At one entrance to the city, a sign under a bronze bust of Vladimir I. Lenin, for whom the city was named, vows: "We will build up our native Leninakan in two years."

The rubble has been cleared in the triangle section of Leninakan, and 100 construction workers are building temporary dormitories for themselves. Martin Akopyan said his Siberian brigade hopes to finish the dorms by the end of February and start on homes for the general population.

Among those hoping for permanent quarters are Asmik Tosunyan and three other people living in a one-room mobile home

donated by West Germany.

Propane stove

The 2-metre by 6-metre room has a propane stove but no electricity or running water, just one mattress and two chairs. The middle-aged woman said she received the home through the dollmaking factory where she worked and moved in on New Year's Day.

Marina Oshpoyan, 18, was not so lucky. Since the earthquake toppled her nine-story apartment building and killed her parents, she has been living in an unheated tent with no water.

As she shivered on a Leninakan street, she said, "I asked for a house but they said, 'where are we going to find one?'"

She and some other residents of Leninakan and Spitak, the city closest to the quake's epicenter, complained that they are unable to obtain clothing donated from abroad and by other Soviet Republics. She accused "the bosses" of keeping it for themselves or selling it.

A deputy premier of Armenia, Yuri I. Khodzhamiryan, said there isn't enough clothing to go around. Asked about the allegation that distributors were diverting goods intended for the needy, he said: "Everywhere there are bad people."

Officials say 6 million square metres of housing must be built in the disaster area in two years, more than 2 million of that in Leninakan itself. New schools and factories also are planned.

But some critics doubt the reconstruction will be on schedule. Vladimir I. Reshitlov, a Soviet construction minister and head of the Leninakan branch of a government earthquake commission, said it is "completely realistic" to expect minimum facilities within two years, but he acknowledged complete restoration will take longer.

Officials insist that construction will be carefully monitored to prevent shoddy workmanship blamed for such a high death toll. A commission is investigating why so many new buildings collapsed in the quake, while older structures were only damaged.

The new buildings will be no higher than four stories and will be located away from areas with heavy seismic activity, said Alexander G. Krivov, deputy chairman of a government committee on architecture and city building. He said more detailed building

codes are being drawn and construction workers will be required to follow them scrupulously. However, along the railroad tracks at Leninakan, wooden building panels and sheetrock are stacked high, warping in the weather and unprotected from moisture.

Authorities have determined it would not be safe to rebuild on the site where Spitak stood, at the confluence of three quake faults. The city, where 23,000 people once lived, and where 3,200 died in the quake, is to be rebuilt a few kilometres to the southeast.

Snow covered mountains

Today, the old city appears frozen in time, a museum of horror. Hundreds of collapsed houses lie where they fell, seemingly untouched since Dec. 7, an eerie sight in the shadow of beautiful, snow-covered mountains.

Eventually the rubble will be cleared and a park, small factories and railroad stations may be built there, officials said. But for now, all energy is being poured into the new location, a picturesque valley with fresh bulldozer tracks on recently cleared fields.

Norik G. Muradyan, the local communist party chief, says the huge workload is good therapy. "When you are left alone, there is always grief — both in your soul and mind — and tears in your eyes," he said in a soft voice.

"But when you are working for the sake of children and their future and for the sake of your homeland, you must put everything aside and work like a devotee to your people."

Bad odours bad news for the body

Unpleasant odours are not only unwelcome but also harmful and lead to serious disorders in the vital functions of the human body. The fight against pollution in Turkey may now extend to pungent smells polluting the environment.

By Selving Karasapan

ANKARA — Environmental pollution comes in different ways. In Turkey doctors have been studying the effect on human health of unwelcome odours.

While fragrance is a boon to the senses, putrid smells can undermine the body. A group of doctors at the Ankara University faculty of medicine got together recently to study the hitherto unexplored realm of aromatic pollution in Turkey.

The experts from the ear, nose and throat, anaesthesiology and heart surgery departments monitored the effects certain smells have on people and their behaviour at home, in universities or schools or at work.

The group, consisting of Professor Cetin Cuhur, Orhan Yilmaz, Mustafa Saati, Handan Cuhur and Hakkı Akalin, established that smells have a tangible effect on the vital functions. When exposed to unpleasant smells for long periods, people show signs of deterioration not only in their day-to-day performance but also in their intelligence.

Dr. Orhan Yilmaz said the research was conducted with the help of healthy individuals and "suitable and willing patients" at the faculty's Ibn-i-Sina Hospital in Ankara. Using a modified device, somewhat similar to that used in assessing the vital functions of heart patients, the doctors exposed 25 volunteers to a range of pleasant and unpleasant smells while monitoring their body functions.

The volunteers were exposed to "ordinary everyday smells,"

such as the fragrance of flowers and household waste, Dr. Yilmaz said. The researchers were careful not to use strongly irritating or sharp smells, and the volunteers were told to breathe normally.

Even so, the results were revealing. Pulse rates went up by a significant 10-20 beats per minute (against normal pulse rates of 60 to 80 beats) in people brought into contact with unpleasant smells. In the same way an approximate 10 to 30 mm rise in blood pressure was noted in volunteers who had normal (110-140mm) blood pressure.

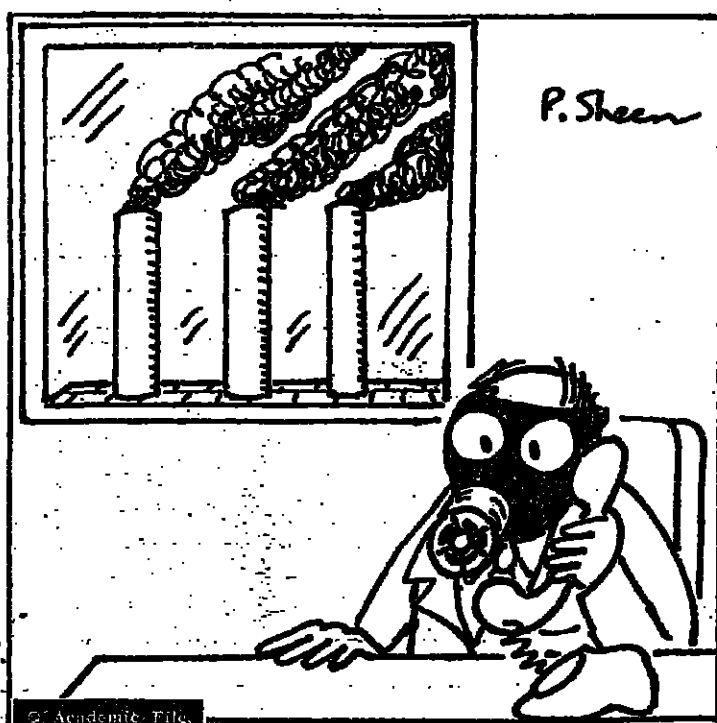
Respiration, on the other hand, fell by 1 to 5 per minute after volunteers came into contact with unpleasant smells. Normal respiration is between 14-18 per minute.

The findings have led the experts to the conclusion that the human body reacts to unpleasant smells by showing signs of stress and mease. Moreover, the doctors found that the stress caused by bad odours was similar to the stress recorded in epilepsy sufferers prior to a seizure.

The effect of pleasant smells was quite the opposite, the doctors found. The volunteers reacted to fragrances with lower blood pressure, slower pulse and increased respiration — all signs of relaxation and a livelier outlook on life.

When the unpleasant odours were removed the vital signs of the volunteers returned to normal, but there were no significant changes when the pleasant smells were removed and volunteers placed in a fragrance-free environment.

Dr. Yilmaz explained that a



"I deny my factory smells to high heaven!"

child raised in a village hut, part home and part barn and usually redolent with a pungent air, would be less eager to breathe and therefore have less oxygen to feed his brain. As a result, the child would also have a poor appetite and suffer from malnutrition. Such a child, he said, would likely grow up with a level of intelligence below that of a child brought up in a cleaner environment.

The study by the Ibn-i-Sina Hospital doctors was presented at an Anaesthesiology and Reanimation Congress held in Turkey in October 1988. But, in the view of Dr. Yilmaz, the subject needs greater study in Turkey, where smell pollution is a

new and unfamiliar subject. He explained that the findings brought a new dimension to the fight against pollution in the country. With more advanced equipment, including a modern olfactometer, which the hospital still lacks, significant advances could be made in improving the quality of life.

Doctors are among major groups exposed to often unpleasant and harmful smells. Other groups include factory workers and school children. With improved air quality in factories and schools, say the experts, both the labour productivity and the success rate of students can be raised significantly. — Academic File.

Swedish scientists seek genetic alarm system on pollution

By Alan Elmer
Reuters

LUND — A team of Swedish scientists is using genetic technology to try to develop a system that would sound the alarm at the first signs of environmental pollution.

"The conventional method of measuring the health of an area is by observing which plants and animals disappear," said Goran Bengtsson, associate professor of ecology at Lund University in southern Sweden. He heads the research team.

"That technique takes a long time and is relatively useless since by the time scientists have made their observations, the damage is already done," he said.

The new Swedish approach uses advanced genetic technology to do the exact opposite — study the organisms and creatures which manage somehow to adapt to polluted environments and survive.

"We know that in extremely polluted places like disused metal mines, some plants and micro-organisms develop genes which help them withstand pollution."

"So by finding and charting the presence of such genes, one could have a rather precise measure of the degree of pollution affecting an environment," Bengtsson said.

At the moment, subtle changes in the environment due to pollution often go undetected until the problem becomes so severe that it can no longer be ignored.

The key to the project, which is backed by \$2.5 million of government money, is to isolate the specific genes which make some creatures tolerant of pollutants.

International goals

A solution containing such genes could then be used to detect the presence of similar genes elsewhere.

"We can do this today but only with a very small number of genes and the technique is not yet sensitive enough. Making it so is an international research goal," said

Bengtsson. Biotechnologists and ecologists are tackling the problem in a number of institutions worldwide. But the Swedish experts believe that Sweden is the first country to pump a relatively large amount of government money into the project.

Creatures which withstand pollution manage to find a number of ingenious ways to excrete, emit or chemically transform toxic elements. Similar genetically-engineered organisms could in future be let loose in polluted environments to clean them up, Bengtsson said.

Such genetic engineering techniques are still highly controversial in many countries where deep reservations have been expressed about "tampering with nature."

One Swedish project compares earthworms from the vicinity of a brass mill which had been worked since the 15th century to worms living in clean soil.

When worms from polluted soil were transferred to clean soil, their reproduction rates failed to match those of worms which had always lived there. And when worms from clean soil were put in polluted soil, they failed to reproduce at all after the first day.

"Species that do well in polluted environments do less well in clean ones," said Bengtsson. "All pollution exacts its price and that should be a warning to us all."

The earthworms' adaptation technique was to excrete proteins which trapped the toxic elements from the soil and made them less poisonous. Bengtsson's next goal is to isolate the specific gene which does this job and breed it in the laboratory.

Even with an advanced early warning system, Bengtsson is far from certain that authorities would heed the warnings, though he said much had been achieved in the past 10 years in raising general ecological consciousness. "But people have to be persuaded that if they ignore scientific warnings today, science may not be able to help them tomorrow," he said.

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Africa seeks alternative to IMF, World Bank pills

NAIROBI (R) — Africa is seeking a sweetened, home-grown medicine to replace that usually prescribed by the IMF and World Bank as a cure for ailing economies.

African finance ministers will meet in Blantyre, Malawi, from March 7-8 and economic ministers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from April 6-10 for final preparations in the search for an African alternative to conventional IMF and World Bank reforms.

African officials charge that the austere reforms sought by those institutions in return for aid undermine the sovereignty of their nations, incur a high human and social cost, and are provoking "adjustment fatigue" among governments.

Reforms sponsored by the IMF and World Bank often include currency devaluations, budget and subsidy cuts, and pruning of government jobs.

But, Africans and others argue, these have served to aggravate poverty, hunger, illness and infant mortality in the world's poorest continent.

"Unemployment has grown. There are schools and even university classes without books and clinics, short of essential drugs, are idled by lack of foreign exchange to import spare parts and there is more hunger as food subsidies are lifted," a U.N. study last year reported.

The search for an African alternative is being led by the Addis Ababa-based U.N. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) which last month staged workshop discussions on the idea. "Main areas of concern relate to effects of orthodox saps (Structural Adjustment Programmes) on social conditions of the people — their lack of the human dimension," a spokesman for ECA Secretary-General Adebo Adedeji told Reuters.

Such programmes focus on short term balancing of finances and jeopardise the long term development of economies, he said in written reply to questions.

"Further, at political level, the way programmes are designed outside African countries undermines national sovereignty," he noted.

He added the workshop, which drew participants from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the United States, and at which the World Bank was represented, generally agreed with these views.

The ECA has also mobilised an international advisory board of 20 African and foreign experts, including IMF and World Bank officials, to act as a "sounding board" on ideas for the African alternative, he said Tuesday.

Supporters of past reforms say that countries which adopted them have often achieved higher growth than those that did not.

Yet IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus, attending a U.N. General Assembly review of African economies last September, said improvements were being sought.

"We have expanded contacts with unrelated agencies that are expert in social policies," he remarked.

Delivering Africa's viewpoint, Mali Foreign Minister Modibo Keita — whose president is current chairman of the Organisation of African Unity — argued the reforms had been only marginally effective and they gave low priority to development of human resources.

In some countries they had provoked riots because of, for example, rising food prices, he said.

"A new, dangerous development is emerging among African countries: Adjustment fatigue."

"This is setting in as more and more African countries reach the point where further austerity measures, in the absence of meaningful economic growth, has become politically and economically untenable," he explained.

Addressing a women's symposium coinciding with the U.N. debate, Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, a banking official from Liberia, said: "As perceived by the average African, structural adjustment is bad, imposed by imperialistic powers and their institutions to further make poor Africans poorer."

Njoki Wainaina of Kenya voiced concern over the impact of government spending cuts on female education and birth control.

In some countries parents were reverting to past practice where, if faced with the choice of sending a boy or girl to school, picked the male, she said.

"It means now that a woman going to a clinic for family planning, which we have spent years motivating, which we have said is essential for higher advancement, may not be able to afford the fees," he added.

Some countries are already seeking their own solution.

Ghana for example, which started structural adjustment reforms in 1983, has developed a programme of action to mitigate the social effects of adjustment (Pamsad).

This enables communities to identify and develop projects especially important to them, such as schools, wells and literacy programmes.

Pamsad also seeks to create jobs through public works and food-for-work projects, and credit schemes for small enterprises and farmers.

Bank study forecasts sharp growth in Asian cities in 90s

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Asia's teeming cities will grow rapidly in the 1990s, requiring major efforts to ensure adequate housing, communications and other infrastructure, an Asian bank study says.

The study predicted that 12 of the world's 25 largest urban centres will be in developing Asian countries by the end of the century.

They will include Calcutta, India, with a forecast population of 16.5 million, Greater Bombay, India, at 16 million and Shanghai, China, at 14.3 million, the Asian Development Bank said Tuesday.

"The resultant sharp increase in urban population will place considerable strain on municipal services such as water supply, electricity, transport facilities, housing, communications and public health services," the report said.

"Adequate provision of these support systems will thus require major efforts in planning and development," it added.

The study attributed the sharp increase in urban population to a shift from agriculture to industry throughout the continent as well as continuing high birth rates.

"In absolute terms, India will thus have to cope with an additional 98 million urban dwellers, China with 73 million, Indonesia with 25 million and Thailand with seven million over the 1990s," the bank said.

According to the bank, Asian economies will continue to grow at a healthy rate through the coming decade, although "regional disparities in the year 2000 will still be profound."

The study said Asian nations averaged a growth rate of more than six per cent a year in the 1970s and 1980s, bringing vast improvements in the quality of life in such nations as South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan.

"Despite all that has been achieved in terms of increases in production and improvements in social conditions, Asia still remains the habitat of half a billion persons living lives of deprivation and extreme poverty," the report said, calling this a "challenge for all institutions."

The life expectancy in Asia's developing countries was expected to rise from an average of 64 years in 1990 to 66 years by the end of the century, it said.

"However, this will range from an average of 52 in Nepal to 76 in Hong Kong," the report said.

The report also predicted that high population growth rates in the poorest Asian countries "will place increasingly heavy demands on limited regional resources."

It said the number of women of child-bearing age was expected to increase from 640 million to nearly 900 million throughout Asia's developing countries excluding China by the end of the century.

"The need to control population growth will remain pressing in lower-income (countries)," the report said.

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Ghana for example, which started structural adjustment reforms in 1983, has developed a programme of action to mitigate the social effects of adjustment (Pamsad).

This enables communities to identify and develop projects especially important to them, such as schools, wells and literacy programmes.

Pamsad also seeks to create jobs through public works and food-for-work projects, and credit schemes for small enterprises and farmers.

The study attributed the sharp increase in urban population to a shift from agriculture to industry throughout the continent as well as continuing high birth rates.

"In absolute terms, India will thus have to cope with an additional 98 million urban dwellers, China with 73 million, Indonesia with 25 million and Thailand with seven million over the 1990s," the bank said.

According to the bank, Asian economies will continue to grow at a healthy rate through the coming decade, although "regional disparities in the year 2000 will still be profound."

The study said Asian nations averaged a growth rate of more than six per cent a year in the 1970s and 1980s, bringing vast improvements in the quality of life in such nations as South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan.

"Despite all that has been achieved in terms of increases in production and improvements in social conditions, Asia still remains the habitat of half a billion persons living lives of deprivation and extreme poverty," the report said, calling this a "challenge for all institutions."

The life expectancy in Asia's developing countries was expected to rise from an average of 64 years in 1990 to 66 years by the end of the century, it said.

"However, this will range from an average of 52 in Nepal to 76 in Hong Kong," the report said.

The report also predicted that high population growth rates in the poorest Asian countries "will place increasingly heavy demands on limited regional resources."

It said the number of women of child-bearing age was expected to increase from 640 million to nearly 900 million throughout Asia's developing countries excluding China by the end of the century.

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"This is setting in as more and more African countries reach the point where further austerity measures, in the absence of meaningful economic growth, has become politically and economically untenable," he explained.

Addressing a women's symposium coinciding with the U.N. debate, Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, a banking official from Liberia, said: "As perceived by the average African, structural adjustment is bad, imposed by imperialistic powers and their institutions to further make poor Africans poorer."

Njoki Wainaina of Kenya voiced concern over the impact of government spending cuts on female education and birth control.

In some countries parents were reverting to past practice where, if faced with the choice of sending a boy or girl to school, picked the male, she said.

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ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

Cuba to boost sugar output, exports

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Cuba has launched a campaign to boost its sugar production to an all-time high over the next couple of years, most of it for export to Socialist Bloc countries, the Cuban government news agency Prensa Latina reported Monday. Production from this year's harvest, which began in November, is expected to top eight million tons and the level is expected to be nine million tons a year after that, the agency said in a dispatch monitored in Mexico City. Prensa Latina quoted Juan Herrera, the sugar industry minister, as saying the government campaign includes better growing methods, savings in fuel used in harvesting and milling sugarcane and a sharp cut in industry's harvesting force of 20,000. Sugar, which is government-owned, is Cuba's principal industry. It is exported mostly to Socialist Bloc countries and accounts for about 80 per cent of the country's foreign income. Exports in 1988 totalled 6.5 million tons, with 83 per cent going to Socialist Bloc countries, the dispatch said.

Low reserves push Caracas to IMF

CARACAS (R) — President Carlos Andres Perez said Monday that Venezuela had exhausted its cash foreign reserves and the country would be forced to accept an International Monetary Fund (IMF) economic programme. Perez, who criticised the fund during the presidential campaign last year, said he still believes IMF programmes cause misery. "I have called the fund an atomic bomb which kills only people," Perez told a gathering of media association heads. Venezuela's \$32 billion foreign debts are the fourth biggest in Latin America. Until this year, it had been the only leading regional debtor which has been able to reschedule its debt without submitting to a fund adjustment programme. The president said Venezuela had only foreign reserves in gold left and his government would not touch those. He said Venezuela will be forced to seek loans from foreign creditors who want to see an IMF programme in place before issuing credits. Venezuela is seeking about \$4.5 billion from the IMF in the form of a three-year extended fund facility. His economic aides say the country hopes to begin drawing on the credit in May.

Gulf Bank to report higher profit

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's second largest bank, Gulf Bank, will report higher 1988 profits after cutting expenses and improving the quality of its assets, chief general manager Youssef Al Awadi has said. The bank said it was cutting its cash dividend to five fils per share from 11 fils in 1987 but was also offering seven bonus shares per 100 held compared to no shares in 1987. The bank reported net profits of seven million dinars (\$24 million) in 1987 on assets of 1.8 billion dinars (\$6.3 billion). Kuwaiti banks are emerging from a recession caused in part by non-performing loans resulting from lower oil revenues and a local stock market crash in 1982. Awadi told Reuters that Gulf Bank had improved its profitability by cutting expenses and implementing a government bad debt settlement scheme. Loan provisions had been reduced because of an improvement in the quality of its portfolio, he said.

Turkish tourism enjoys a boom

ISTANBUL (R) — A record 4.17 million tourists visited Turkey in 1988, a 46 per cent rise from 1987 that included a dramatic increase in Greek visitors, the tourism ministry has said. West Germans led the field with 768,000 tourists, followed by Britain with 465,000 arrivals. Greece came third with 430,000 nationals visiting their Aegean neighbour. Only 174,000 Greeks visited Turkey in 1987, but numbers have soared since the January 1988 no-war pact between the Turkish and Greek prime ministers in Davos, Switzerland. The 1988 figures overshot a forecast of 3.8 million tourists. More than 4.6 million are forecast to come in 1989. The number of Poles visiting Turkey in 1988 nearly tripled to 166,000. Yugoslavia, France, Iran and the United States were also among the top eight sources of tourists. Tourism is expected to contribute more than \$2 billion to Turkey's current account in 1988, helping the balance of payments into its first surplus since 1973.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Wednesday, Feb. 15, 1989 Central Bank official rates				
U.S. dollar	Buy	Sell	French franc	85.8 86.7
Japanese yen (for 100)	538.0 542.0		Japanese yen (for 100)	426.3 431.9
Dutch guilder	953.3 963.9		Dutch guilder	258.7 261.3
Swiss franc	291.9 295.0		Swiss franc	85.6 86.4
Belgian franc (for 100)	344.1 348.2		Belgian franc (for 100)	139.4 140.7

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.7685/95	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1825/35	Canadian dollar	
	1.8430/37	Deutschemarks	
	2.0805/15	Dutch guilders	
	1.5655/65	Swiss francs	
	38.62/67	Belgian francs	
	6.2725/75	French francs	
	13471/1349	Italian lire	
	126.25/35	Japanese yen	
	6.2830/80	Swedish crowns	
	6.6750/6800	Norwegian crowns	
	7.1700/50	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	381.10/381.60	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Stocks closed lower in lacklustre trading due in part to lower metal prices and lack of direction from Wall Street. The All Ordinaries index fell 6.4 to 1,479.2.

TOKYO — The Nikkei index rose strongly to a record close, although declines just exceeded advances in the broader market. The Nikkei rose 166.59 to 32,131.99.

HONG KONG — Stocks ended little changed after a day when fears about the weaker U.S. dollar competed with bargain hunters hoping to jump onto a local bull market. The Hang Seng rose 0.90 to 3,100.87.

SINGAPORE — Share prices closed slightly higher after a two-session in active trading. The Straits Times industrial index managed a small 2.39 point gain to 1,122.56.

BOMBAY — Share prices met with widespread profit-taking after a mid-session rally to close lower in moderate trading. Tata Steel fell 13.75 rupees to 1,196.25 and Larsen five to 107.

FRANKFURT — Shares took a sharp turn downward in active dealing after a smaller than expected Bundesbank securities repurchase allocation revived fears of an interest-rate rise. The DAX index fell 14.15 to 1,317.32.

ZURICH — Prices closed steady to higher in fairly quiet trading. Most blue chips recovered on fresh buying after a mixed opening. The all-share Swiss index rose 2.7 to 976.6.

PARIS — Prices were falling sharply at mid-session as concern deepened over an expected coordinated rise in European interest rates on Thursday.

LONDON — Shares moved to a low point for the day after an easier opening on Wall Street, but a quick recovery on the U.S. market saw leading issues move off their lowest levels. The FTSE 100 index was down 6.7 at 2,042.4.

NEW YORK — Stocks were around their highs of the session in mid-morning. The Dow was up nine at 2,290.

Soviets to maintain strong economic ties with Kabul

NEW DELHI (R) — Moscow's military intervention in Afghanistan ended Wednesday with the last Soviet soldier leaving Afghan soil but economically the countries remain as inextricably linked as ever.

Afghanistan, one of the world's poorest nations before the war, is physically and economically shattered after 10 years of conflict, say Western and Indian analysts.

Long-term trade accords between the Afghan government of President Najibullah and the Soviet Union mean that Moscow will probably retain significant leverage with its southern neighbour, whoever holds power in Kabul.

"I think it is very doubtful that any government that comes to power will be able to wipe the slate clean with the Soviet Union," said a Western diplomat who had been assigned to Kabul.

"They have always had a strong economic presence. I do not know that there will be

At least 56 people killed in election-related violence

Sri Lankans defy death threats vote

COLOMBO (Agencies) — At least 56 people were shot or stabbed to death Wednesday as Sri Lankans braved death threats to vote in the country's first parliamentary election in 11 years, police said.

Authorities blamed Sinhalese extremists for 47 deaths, including the slaying of the son of a cabinet minister.

Seven extremists were killed by police and two other people were killed by militants from the Tamil ethnic minority, police said.

More than 1,000 people, including 14 candidates, have been slain since campaigning started Jan. 6 under threats from both Sinhalese and Tamil extremists who had vowed to disrupt the election.

Wednesday's death toll mounted as reports came in from remote parts of the Indian Ocean island, once famed only for its sandy beaches, sparkling gemstones and tranquil mountain retreats. Police said there were no massacres, but a series of killings of one to five or six people at a time.

Tamil and Sinhalese militants both oppose a plan to give more autonomy to the country's Tamil minority. The Sinhalese militants claim the plan offers too much and the Tamils say it is inadequate.

President Ranasinghe Premadasa Wednesday predicted victory for his governing United National Party (UNP). Premadasa, and his wife Hema, were among the first voters in central Colombo.

"We have given maximum protection to the voters," Premadasa told reporters. "People are turning out in large numbers as you can see."

Premadasa, in a white sarong and a loose white shirt, was followed by hundreds of green-cap-

ped UNP supporters as he and his wife walked about 500 metres from his home to the polling station.

"We will win the elections with a two-third majority," he said. In the existing 168-seat parliament, the UNP held 139 seats, 82 per cent of the total. The opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party held eight seats. The remaining were shared by smaller parties and unattached members.

In the mountain town of Kandy 90 kilometres northeast of Colombo, four young Sinhalese men were shot dead Tuesday night, police said. They blamed the killings on the People's Liberation Front, a group of ultra-nationalist Sinhalese.

In Moratuwa, nine kilometres south of Colombo, a family that supported Premadasa's party was attacked in their home Tuesday night. One person was killed and six others, including a three-year-old boy, were badly wounded, police said, blaming the front for the attack.

On the eve of the balloting, several passenger buses were set ablaze after passengers were forced to disembark. At least 25 people have died since Monday in a variety of incidents as Sinhalese militants launched a series of attacks in an attempt to enforce the election boycott, authorities said. At least 17 of the dead were supporters of the UNP.

Forces on alert

Over 80,000 Sri Lankan soldiers and policemen took up positions through the island to ensure calm balloting at the 8,070 polling booths, government officials said.

In the north and east of the island, 40,000 Indian troops were to enforce a peace accord, were told "to be very strict with any attempts to disrupt the polls," said a Indian diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

India got involved in Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis initially because of the sympathies of its own 60 million Tamils for the rebel cause.

Tamils form 18 per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million people and say they are discriminated against by the Sinhalese, who make up 75 per cent of the population and control the government and the military.

Voting is being conducted for the first time on the basis of proportional representation.

Good turnout

Election Department officials said despite the death threats issued by the extremists, more voters than expected turned up after a slow start in the morning.

In some of the southern areas dominated by Sinhalese, the voter turnout was better 50 and 60 per cent, they said.

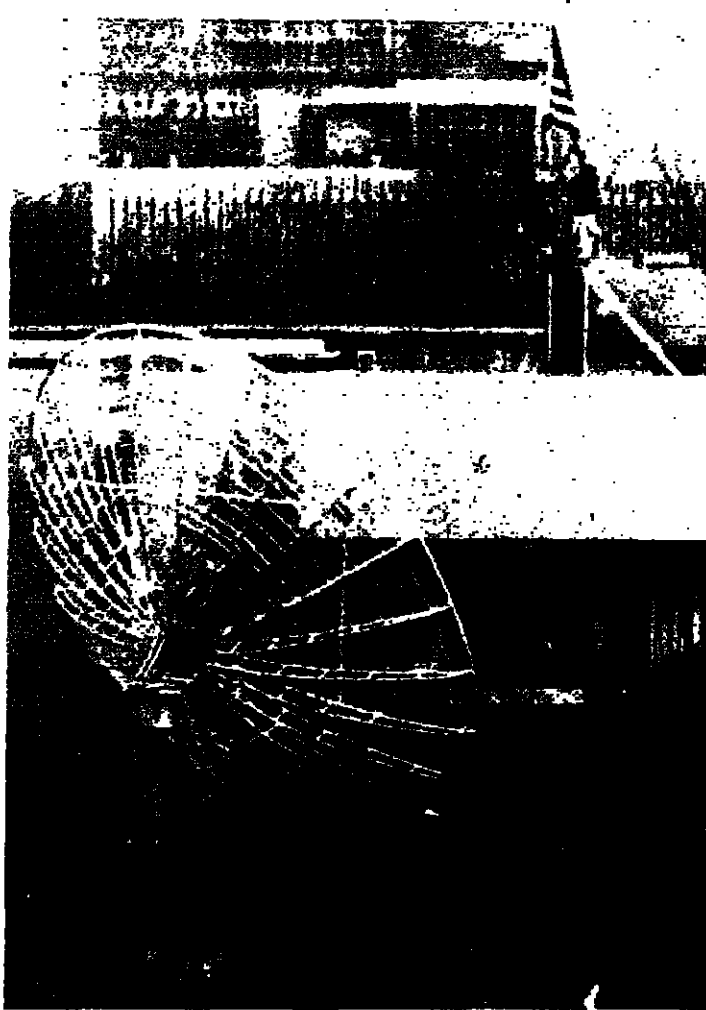
However, in Matara and Galle, strongholds of the extremist front, fewer people voted.

Police blamed the front for most of the violence, but observers said inter-party rivalry also accounted for some of the killings.

In the north and east, where Tamil guerrillas are fighting for an independent state, the situation was better with a turnout of about 70 per cent, residents said.

"This is much better than the voting in the presidential election," one official said.

Polls opened at 7:00 a.m. (0130 GMT) and closed nine hours later. Significant returns were not expected until Thursday.



Pakistani demonstrators stormed United States Information Centre in Islamabad Monday, and hauled down the U.S. flag during violent protest against Salman Rushdie's book 'Satanic Verses'.

Uproar over Rushdie book hits new peak

LONDON (Agencies) — Islamic fundamentalist opposition and death threats against Salman Rushdie, author of "The Satanic Verses," grew Wednesday with Iranian Revolutionary Guards vowing to kill the author and demonstrators stoning the British embassy in Tehran.

Rushdie was reported under heavy police guard Wednesday following an "execution" order from Iran's revolutionary patriarch, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

A British Muslim leader joined Khomeini's call late Tuesday saying Rushdie "deserves hanging."

The Pakistani government said it was pushing for concerted action against Rushdie, his novel and its publishers. A sixth person died Wednesday in Pakistan after being wounded in an attack on the American Cultural Centre in Islamabad in protest against the book earlier this week.

Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said the Revolutionary Guards Corps, which comprise militants devoted to Khomeini, expressed in a statement Wednesday "readiness to carry out the imam's (Khomeini's) decree" to "execute" Rushdie.

Khomeini Tuesday urged Muslims to kill the Indian-born writer and his publishers for insulting Islam by publishing the 547-page novel.

Iran protests

Some 2,000 protesters demonstrated outside the British embassy in central Tehran Wednesday in support of Khomeini's decree and to express anger over the book, which many Muslims consider blasphemous to Islam.

The novel, a surreal story about a struggle between good and evil, is viewed by Islamic fundamentalists as an insult to the Prophet Mohammad. Rushdie has denied the book is blasphemous. It has been banned in several countries and stirred violent protests in Rushdie's homeland India and in Pakistan in which six people were killed.

Fundamentalist and opposition leaders in Pakistan said Wednesday that protest meetings and marches would be held in all major cities Friday to demand that the government dismiss and punish officials responsible for violently breaking up an anti-Rushdie protest Sunday.

A Pakistani foreign ministry spokesman told reporters he would call in all the ambassadors of Islamic countries and put forward a plan for united action against the novel.

It would include banning from the Islamic world all books by the publishers unless they halted publication of the novel and withdrew from sale copies in the shops, he said.

The spokesman also said Pakistan would ask Britain and the United States to halt publication of the novel.

A senior British diplomat, reached at the embassy by telephone by the AP from Nicosia, said the "noisy" demonstrators paraded outside the walled compound on Ferdowsi Avenue for three hours.

"Local authorities provided effective protection," said the diplomat. But, he added, the demonstrators hurled stones at the several-storey building "and some of the windows were broken."

The extermination call and demonstrations coincided with an appeal by Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati for an emergency meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to debate Rushdie's book.

Tehran Radio said markets and theological schools across Iran were shut down in a day of mourning to protest over the novel.

Rushdie under guard

Armed police were reported Wednesday to be guarding Rushdie.

A Scotland Yard spokesman said it was police policy not to comment on matters of personal security. But the Times of London said armed police guards had been called in to protect the writer.

A spokeswoman for Viking said Wednesday that the publisher could not confirm or deny that Rushdie was under guard. It is rare for British armed police to guard private citizens.

Sayed Abdul Qudus, joint secretary of the Council of Mosques in the northern English city of Bradford, told reporters: "Every good Muslim is after his life... (he) has tortured Islam and has to pay the penalty. He deserves hanging."

"There are any number of people who would willingly carry out what to us would not be a crime but a justified act."

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Honduras to expel Nicaraguan rebels

COSTA DEL SOL, El Salvador (R) — Central American leaders agreed that Nicaraguan rebels be expelled from Honduras in return for Nicaragua holding free elections early next year.

The accord, which could spell the end for the U.S.-backed contras, came at the close of a two-day summit aimed at breathing new life into regional peace process begun in 1987.

El Salvador's President Jose Napoleon Duarte, reading a declaration hammered out at a sometimes acrimonious summit of the five presidents, said Tuesday they had agreed to produce a plan within 90 days to demobilise the contras by repatriating them or sending them to third countries.

Contra reaction

But senior contra leaders, who have been hovering outside the summit, said no peace accord concluded without direct talks between them and the Sandinistas was valid.

"Whatever accord is reached based on (President Daniel) Ortega's promise is equal to trying to leash a dog with sausages," said one of the leaders, Adolfo Calero.

The rebels, who have been fighting the Sandinista government for eight years, had no part in the summit talks.

The agreement was a further blow to the rebels following the end of U.S. aid a year ago. It underlined the widespread view that they are a spent force militarily and politically.

Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista government pledged in return to accept a package of political reforms, including freedom of the press, unrestricted activity by opposition politicians, and changes in the electoral code.

These would facilitate presidential and general elections no later than Feb. 25, 1990. The Organisation of American States (OAS) and the United Nations would be asked to act as observers.

Nicaragua also said they would free political prisoners. It says about 1,600 former national guardsmen jailed after the Sandinista's 1979 revolutionary victory would be released.

U.S. officials in Washington declined to comment on the agreement, but said they would study it.

The leaders overcame a thorny question of how to monitor political freedom in all the countries — the source of a blunt exchange between El Salvador and Nicaragua Monday.

Nicaragua backed off a proposal to give a formal role to international organisations and agreed that each country's own National Reconciliation Commission, would take responsibility.

Several of those commissions have ceased functioning since they were set up after the presidents' 1987 summit, in which they signed a plan designed to end the regional wars and rivalries by promoting genuine democracy and human rights.

Bhopal victims see settlement as sellout

BHOPAL (R) — Survivors of the 1984 Bhopal gas disaster Wednesday described as "niggardly" the \$470-million final settlement of the victims' claims announced Tuesday.

Some doubted whether the injured and the families of the 3,300 dead would benefit much.

"With money, the dead are not going to become alive," said Shyam Dulari, 65, whose daughter-in-law died recently from the effects of the lethal gas escape Dec. 3, 1984, without ever receiving compensation.

"Whether we receive the money or not, we are ruined," said Shanti Bai, who lives in a slum area outside the Union Carbide pesticides plant from which the methyl isocyanate escaped.

She has been unable to work since the disaster and depends on the income of her husband, a cart-pusher in the city.

How and when the money will be allocated has not yet been announced, but one survivor suggested the families of the dead should get 200,000 rupees (\$13,000) and the injured 100,000 rupees (\$6,500) immediately.

Another victim, Bade Miyan, 70, said the amount was not enough for all the victims. Besides the dead, more than 100,000 people were injured and 525,000 have filed claims for material loss. "This would mean less than \$900 for each person if the \$470 million is distributed equally."

"I do not think the settlement will benefit the victims much," he said.

Local groups representing the victims agreed Wednesday the gas-hit Women Industry

Workers' Organisation planned a rally and a demonstration Wednesday outside the house of Madhya Pradesh state governor K.M. Candy and said they would submit a petition saying the amount was quite inadequate.

On Saturday the Poisonous Gas Episode Struggle Front will demonstrate outside the home of the state's chief minister. Its convener said the protest would be over the "niggardly amount" of the settlement and to press for permanent jobs to be found for survivors.

"We will move the Indian Supreme Court to press for enhancing the settlement amount," he said. The company, which has always denied responsibility for the accident, had accused an unnamed employee of deliberately allowing tonnes of the lethal gas to escape from a storage tank. It denied liability, saying it neither directly owned nor operated the plant.

The Indian government has accepted the decision, although it originally sought \$3.3 billion on behalf of 525,000 people claiming damages.

Seventeen hundred people, most of them living in shanties downwind of the plant, awoke vomiting as the yellow cloud of methyl isocyanate swept over their homes and died within a few hours after the Bhopal gas leak.

Since then the death toll has claimed to 3,300. The government said last September that 100,000 people were still receiving treatment for their injuries and many more are expected to die young.

Gesell rejects deal

WASHINGTON (AP) — The judge in the Iran-contras case of Oliver North has rejected a proposal to allow the government to prevent disclosures by the defence.

In the meantime, Gerard Gesell said he will wait a U.S. Supreme Court ruling on whether the trial will be blocked indefinitely during a review of his own secrecy procedures.

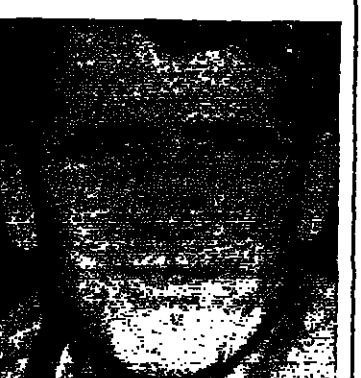
The high court, which has temporarily stayed the trial's start, will meet Friday to discuss the issue.

Defence attorneys opposed the proposal ruled on by Gesell Tuesday, which was a compromise reached by the Justice Department and independent prosecutor Lawrence Walsh. The defence claims former President Ronald Reagan and others secretly arranged for third countries to support the contras in exchange for favours from the United States.

The lawyers raised the issue of covert Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) support in documents filed in court Tuesday.

"If the court requires prior notice of this covert support, it will effectively require prior notice before any exploration of quid pro quo arrangements that are central to this case," North's lawyers said.

They said their defence of North requires introduction of details about the "quid pro quo," which they say include involvement by Reagan in a coverup of such arrangements with the other countries as well as an agreement that Congress be kept in the dark. Charges against North include



Oliver North

shredding documents and lying to Congress and then-Attorney General Edwin Meese III in 1986 to hide North's role in the sales of arms to Iran and diversion of some proceeds to the contra rebels in Nicaragua.

His lawyers claim he can't get a fair trial unless they present evidence that the government claims would jeopardise national security.

Gesell held a hearing Tuesday on the compromise worked out between the Justice Department and Walsh, who was appointed as prosecutor because the case involved White House officials.

The proposal was aimed at preventing surprise disclosures by North, and it was strongly opposed by the former National Security Council aide's lawyers.

Gesell ruled that the Justice Department must rely on Walsh's prosecutors to speak in court for the government on all disclosures, including appeals of any judicial determinations that he will meet Friday to discuss the issue.

COLUMN

Quake benefit filled with stars

NEW YORK (AP) — Tenor Plácido Domingo and cellist-conductor Mstislav Rostropovich head the bill for a classical music concert to benefit the Soviet-Armenian Earthquake Relief Fund of the American Red Cross. Tickets range from \$15 to \$1,000 for the Feb. 21 Carnegie hall concert, whose principal planners are Domingo, the Soviet-born Rostropovich, and conductor Lorin Maazel.

Domingo will have sung the dress rehearsal of "La Bohème" at the Metropolitan Opera the day of the concert. Russian mezzo-soprano Elena Obraztsova is flying from Moscow to sing. American mezzo Frederica von Stade will arrive in New York a few hours before the start of the benefit. Other performers scheduled include bass Paata Burchuladze, pianists Alexander Toradze and Vladimir Viardo, sopranos Mirella Freni and Aprile Mollo, bass Samuel Ramey, and newcomers Vadim Repin, a 17-year-old Soviet violinist, and soprano Kallen Esperian, a University of Illinois graduate.

Don't forget things, call Nord

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania (AP) — Kevin Nord makes certain you remember anniversaries, birthdays, hair appointments, or just about anything else you do not want to forget but do not trust yourself to remember. Nord, it seems, is a professional "reminder." Send him a card listing the date of an important event, and seven to 10 days beforehand Nord will send a reminder post card and follow it up a few days later with a telephone call. Prices are \$2 for each reminder or \$1.75 each for 10 or more. If no one is at home for the reminder call, he will try again, and again, and again. "If worse comes to worse, I'll go out and knock on your door if I have to," he said.

Right to be named Princess

LONDON (AP) — A two-and-a-half-year-old girl has won the right to be named Princess, after her parents fought a lengthy battle with Scottish officials that also included Buckingham Palace. Princess Dulcinea Rosetta Manwaring-Spencer claims no royal connections, but her parents liked the name and never imagined they'd run into problems with the royal family and the government. Audrey and Hugh Manwaring-Spencer finally emerged triumphant last week when Scotland's registrar General of births, deaths and marriages backed down and decided there was no specific authority banning the use of names like Princess. "They're very pleased that it's finally been resolved and they can finally call their little girl Princess," a family spokesman said Tuesday.

'Mail-order brides legal'

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden's top anti-racism watchdog said Tuesday the trade in Asian "mail-order brides" for lonely Swedish men was not illegal. The ombudsman against ethnic discrimination said a nine-month investigation into the business failed to find grounds to declare it either unlawful or unethical. "Even if a woman who comes to Sweden is treated like a slave and the man uses, abuses and violates her rights, it is not easy to cast the blame on the marriage broker," Gunilla Upmark said. "Some people simply prefer meeting their partner through an agency. Just because the agencies make money is not enough cause for condemnation. Neither is the fact that some may choose partners on the basis of nationality," she said.

Seal hunting film outrages viewers

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Hundreds of angry television viewers called the Norwegian embassy, major newspapers and conservationists to react to a film about Norwegian seal hunting. Swedish media reported. The documentary ran on Swedish television Saturday night and showed seal puppies being clubbed to death and seals apparently being skinned alive. "I have never seen anything as disgusting. I am boycotting Norway," 23-year-old Freddie Karlsson told the Aftonbladet daily. Some viewers called police to threaten attacks on Norwegian installations, said Swedish radio. The film, "About Seals and Humans," reportedly triggered similar outrage when it ran on Danish and British television last week.

Another food-poisoning scare engulfs Britain

LONDON (R) — Another food-poisoning scare has erupted in Britain as critics accuse the government of presenting the public with a chaotic menu of warnings about eggs, chilled meals and now cheese.

"This time it's foot-in-mouth disease," headlined the Daily Mail Tuesday, as cabinet ministers seemed to contradict each other.

"There appears to be some confusion," Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher acknowledged amid uproar in parliament when pressed by Labour opposition leader Neil Kinnock to clarify statements by two ministers over a possible ban on cheese made from unpasteurised milk.

The leader of Britain's farmers said the government had sown confusion and hysteria in its handling of a cheese poisoning scare just weeks after warnings about contaminated eggs and bacteria in supermarket chilled food.

"Listeria has turned to hyste-

ria," said Simon Gourlay, chairman of the National Farmers Union (NFU). He was referring to a potentially lethal bacteria which government officials warned has been found in soft, unpasteurised cheeses.

"For pity's sake, let's get things into perspective," he told the union's annual conference. "The consumer should be aware of any risks but must be allowed to exercise freedom of choice. The public is totally confused at present."

The government advised pregnant mothers Friday not to eat brie, camembert and blue cheeses, warning they might be infected with listeria.

Gourlay accused the government of completely mishandling the issue and failing to coordinate between ministries.

Friday's announcement prompted fears among British and French farmers that sale and import of the cheeses might be banned.

Last weekend tabloid newspapers published front-page reports with banner headlines such as "Cheese can kill your baby."

Two British ministers added to confusion Monday by making apparently contradictory statements about the purported danger.

Agriculture Minister John MacGregor said in Brussels that proposals to ban the cheeses had been rejected. But within hours, Health Minister Kenneth Clarke said MacGregor was still considering a ban.

MacGregor said during a meeting with NFU conference delegates Tuesday there were definitely no plans for a ban. The advice to pregnant women had been given as a precaution. "Let me make it clear. There is no conspiracy, no complacency and no confusion," he told delegates. But the NFU passed a motion of no-confidence, condemning the government handling of the listeria issue.



Salman Rushdie

S. African hunger strikers defiant despite release of 17

JOHANNESBURG (R) — About 300 detainees in South African jails will press ahead with a hunger strike despite Pretoria's release of 17 detainees and promises that more will be freed soon, supporters of the strikers said Wednesday.

"My brother, who was so weak he could only see us for five minutes, said he and his colleagues would continue with the strike until they are charged or released," said John Buthelezi, whose brother Pule has been in detention since October 1987.

The strikers launched their action Jan. 23 in prisons in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and the mining town of Witbank, saying they were prepared to die unless they were released or charged.

They are all being held according to emergency laws under which they can be detained indefinitely without trial.

Law and Order Ministry spokesman Brigadier Leon Mellet said Vlok would resume meetings Wednesday with lawyers and parents.

"It is very possible that more

releases will result from the minister's meeting with lawyers and family members, but probably not on Wednesday," Mellet said.

On Thursday Vlok is also due to meet Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who declined to join the strike but called on Christians to fast three days a week.

Law and Order Minister Adrian Vlok said Tuesday that 17 detainees had been freed. He promised lawyers and parents of detainees that he would release more soon.

Buthelezi told a Johannesburg news conference that his brother, who was a member of a Soweto youth organisation, was adamant that he and fellow hunger strikers were not going to be persuaded to resume eating until their conditions were met.

"He asked us to smile and not to wear sombre faces during our visits, because he and his colleagues have embarked on the only course to bring attention to their long-term unjustified incarceration," Buthelezi said.

More than 30,000 people have

been held for varying periods since Pretoria declared emergency rule in June 1986.

Doctors at the news conference said 20 detainees were in hospital and their health was deteriorating.

"As doctors who have seen the physical suffering that the hunger strikers are voluntarily enduring and, having seen that they are willing to face the real prospect of dying, we are convinced that this is the last and desperate attempt to obtain a fair hearing," said one doctor who asked not to be named.

At least thirteen other hunger strikers have been admitted to hospital suffering from giddiness, failing eyesight, severe weight-loss and dehydration.

Government officials earlier told lawyers representing the strikers that no detainees would be released as long as they were still on hunger strike. They would first have to be rehabilitated and declared medically fit, the officials said.

Lens wearers warned about homemade solutions

WASHINGTON (R) — Careless use of homemade salt solutions to clean contact lenses could lead to damaged vision or even blindness, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said Wednesday.

It said the solutions, prepared by dissolving salt tablets or commercial preparations in water, were safe when heated and used to disinfect lenses before they are

put into the eyes.

But the solutions could become contaminated with germs despite the presence of salt, the FDA said. Micro-organisms could enter the eye and cause serious infections if the contaminated solution was later used as a rinse or wetting agent after the lenses had been disinfected.

Even a commercially prepared chemical disinfectant may not

suffice if used along with a homemade salt solution, it said.

Although the chemical solution kills most types of organisms, it may not be completely effective against a microorganism called acanthamoeba which is sometimes found to contaminated homemade salt solutions, the FDA said.

Though acanthamoeba infections are rare, they appear to be

on the rise, with 200 cases reported since 1984, it said.

A recent study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta found that 21 of 27 people with acanthamoeba infections had used homemade salt solutions, though many also kept their lenses in while swimming and disinfected them less often than manufacturers recommended, the FDA said.

Contact lens wearers who want to use a rinse or wetting agent after disinfecting their lenses should buy a sterile saline solution, the FDA recommended.

Homemade solutions should be prepared fresh each day and thrown out after use. The bottle in which the solution is made should be sterilised in boiling water for 10 minutes at least once a week, the agency said.

help in life